



THE

CAUSE OF REFORM.

[To be read three times over, especially by the Prime Minister.]

A MEETING on the subject of *Parliamentary Reform*, and to present a petition on the part of the inhabitants of this city, was held in ST. ANDREW'S HALL, in the CITY OF NORWICH, on the nineteenth instant, not less than three thousand persons being present, MR. WISEMAN, the Sheriff, being in the chair. SIR THOMAS BEEVOR, Bart., whose speech I shall insert presently, moved the resolutions, which were eight in number, and in words as we shall presently read them. This was a most important meeting. My Register would not be sufficient, if it were devoted to nothing else, to contain an account of the proceedings of one tenth nor one twentieth part of the meetings, which have been held, within this month, of *towns, cities and counties*, for the purpose of petitioning for Parliamentary Reform. In 1817, MAJOR CARTWRIGHT and I were the only resolution and petition writers in the whole Kingdom, in favour of Parliamentary Reform. A great many people were in motion, but they were all set in motion by us two; and that worthy old veteran in the cause thought he had carried a monstrous point, when he had obtained the consent of the shilly-shally BURDETT to suffer him to put a fac-simile of his name to a parcel of circulars, calling on the people to rouse in the cause of reform, with which circulars, and with a sort of general recommendatory letter from Mr. ALDERMAN WOOD, I believe (was) he dispatched off a little Irish-

man of the name of CLEARY, in a gig, as a sort of TRAVELLER in the cause. My God! How we have got on! "Waust improvements, maum," as paunchy Mrs. Omnium says to skinny Mrs. Scrip, when they meet upon a new road across a common, of which the labouring people have just been robbed by the GRASP-ALLS, in virtue of one of those "proofs of national prosperity" called enclosure bills! Talk of "*march of mind*," indeed! Look at insignificant BURDETT now! What would now the fac-simile of his wretched name be worth! Oh, that the honest old major were but alive this day!

When one looks at the crowds of opulent merchants and manufacturers, of old yeomanry cavalry farmers, of land-owners; and when we hear an *Earl*, who is by no means unmindful of *number one*, actually calling for annual Parliaments, universal suffrage, and voting by ballot; when we behold these crowds, and contemplate their proceedings; and then, for a moment, look back at little Cleary and his hack horse and gig, and his bundle of fac-similie-circulars; when we think of the meeting of *deputy operatives*, in London, of the pop-gun-plot number two; of the poor blanketeers, huddled into Manchester jail-yard; and of the power-of-imprisonment bill, which drove me across the seas and dragged scores of victims to dungeons; when we thus view the present and glance back at the past, the bare contemplation of such a "*march of mind*" really seems to threaten to unsettle our senses. *What crime* had we committed, then, when green *bags* were brought down to prove to a *secret* committee that it was necessary to place the person of every man in the kingdom at the mercy of the Secretary of State? *What crime* had we committed when LORD FITZWILLIAM voted for both gagging and dungeoning us, and LORD MILTON for the latter; and when MR. LAMB, now LORD MELBOURN, though never, as I

have understood, a harsh or ill-natured man, voted for the measure, *for the sake of the safety of the people themselves*? What crime had we committed, when from the Mansion-House of London, from the public-office at Manchester, and from every hell-hole of selfishness, cowardice, and cruelty; from the parsons all over the kingdom; from the Universities; and, in short, from every resort of wealth and of the influence of property, came up addresses to the Prince Regent, calling for measures of severity against us, designating us, who were the leaders, as designing and wicked men, aiming at the overthrow of all property and all rank, being, as the calumniating addresses described us, destitute ourselves of all property and all character? What crime had we committed; what had we done to deserve these calumnies and this savage treatment? Why we had been guilty of no crime at all; there had been no breach of the peace throughout the whole country; no violence, and no attempt at violence of any description. The contents of the green bags were never published. The atrocious falsehoods alleged against us were never attempted to be supported by proof: all that was said against us was a lie from the beginning to the end: all that we had really done was, to petition for a reform of the people's, or Commons', House of Parliament; all that we had done was to pray; and to pray, too, for not a tenth part of what is prayed for now by all the towns and cities and counties in the kingdom. We prayed for a reform of the Parliament; for an abolition of sinecures and of unmerited pensions; we prayed for an adjustment of salaries, and of interest of debt to the altered value of the money; we prayed for a reduction of the standing army; all these we prayed for in order that the distresses of the country might be relieved in time, and that anarchy and confusion might thereby be prevented. For this sensible and humble prayer it was that I was left to choose between exile and a dungeon; for this humble prayer it was that OGDEN was crammed into a dungeon with his bowels

protruding from his bursting body; for this prayer it was that groans were heard in the dungeons of all the jails, that parents had to mourn their sons, wives their husbands, and children their fathers, some of whom were driven to insanity, and others to suicide, by their sufferings, while not one man of the survivors was ever attempted to be brought to trial, and while those who procure these laws to be passed, and to be *exceeded* in their execution, the precious Parliament covered by a bill of indemnity.

Well, but *what are the prayers now*? What are the prayers that the traders, the farmers, the manufacturers, the merchants, the land-owners, are now sending to parliament? They pray for all that we prayed for in the first place, and in language ten times as bold; they pray that the aristocracy may no longer be suffered to take away the incomes of the middle class, and to rob the labourer of the fruit of his toil. But, which is a thing that we never attempted to allude to, not even to allude to, they pray for an abolition of the tithes; or, for applying them to the relief of the poor and repairing of the churches; or, as in the instance immediately before us, for taking away the whole of the church property altogether, and applying it to the liquidation of the debt. The resolutions agreed to at this fine meeting at Norwich are a fair specimen of what the borough-mongers have to digest; and therefore I will insert them before I proceed further.

First—That in all cases of aggravated distress there is a point at which human nature becomes incapable of further endurance, and where this distress is of a public nature, and can be traced to legislative causes, men begin to lose their respect for the laws, and are ready to encounter dangers the most appalling in opposition to them.

Secondly—That the events which have lately taken place in the majority of the counties of England, clearly prove that at this point we have already arrived.

Thirdly—That this distress has

"been caused by an overwhelming weight of taxation; imposed partly for the payment of the interest of an enormous public debt, principally incurred in carrying on an unjust and unnecessary war, for the purpose of crushing the rising liberties of a neighbouring nation, and preventing salutary reforms at home; and partly for the maintenance of innumerable pensions and sinecure offices, and inordinately overpaid, and, in many instances, unnecessary establishments, both civil and military, for the benefit of the Aristocracy and their dependants.

"*Fourth*—That not only is a considerable portion of the taxes shared amongst the members of this Aristocracy, but the taxes themselves are imposed in such a manner as to bear least heavily upon them, and whilst notwithstanding the repeal of some duties and the reduction of others, the actual weight of taxation has been increased by the change which has been made in the value of the circulating medium, a tax upon bread has been imposed for the purpose of protecting them from the consequences of that change.

"*Fifthly*—That it is highly desirable, nay, necessary to our prosperity and safety as a nation, that these burdens should be reduced, and this debt got rid of; and in order to effect these objects, that the most rigid economy be enforced in every department, and that *all that public property commonly called Church Property and Crown Lands be appropriated to the public service.*

"*Sixthly*—That measures so important, so extensive, and involving the happiness or misery of millions, can only be safely carried into effect by a Parliament enjoying the full confidence of the people; and that, in order to insure that confidence, it is necessary that the House of Commons should be in reality, as it is in the theory of the Constitution, elected by the whole body of the people; and to render members responsible to those by whom they are elected,

that the duration of Parliament be materially shortened.

"*Seventhly*—That it is not only a fraud but a cruel mockery to grant to any man, nominally, rights, from the free exercise of which he is in effect debarred, and that this takes place to a considerable extent even in the present limited state of the right of suffrage; and therefore that, in order to guarantee to every individual the free exercise of his rights, as well as to secure to the State the conscientious discharge of a trust, the most important to society, without having recourse to the monstrous injustice of making amount of property the test of fitness for the enjoyment of the elective franchise, it is of the highest importance that in all future elections for Members of Parliament the votes be taken by Ballot.

"*Eighthly*—That a Petition founded on the foregoing Resolutions be presented to both Houses of Parliament; that Lord King be requested to present it to the House of Lords, and the Members for the City to the House of Commons."

Can the boroughmongers look at the above, and not begin to think that it would have been better for them if they had given way in 1817, instead of stirring up bands of wretches to calumniate the reformers through the channel of addresses? Let them look at the resolution, Number 5. Let them cogitate upon that. Let them now say whether it would not have been well for them, if they had yielded in 1817; long before any man had ever even whispered a proposition such as that contained in No. 5. Nay, would they not now gladly submit to what was demanded in 1817? Yes, they would; but now they see that the thing could not stop even there. In that very year, or the year after, I forget which, I addressed a letter to them from my place of exile, in which I told them that a few years would make them repent of not having yielded to our just demands then; and I tell them now, that if the present demands be rejected, the next will be still higher; for if the Government and the

Parliament should shut their eyes to the danger; if they should not see the perils that surround them, the people see them. If they cannot see the effect of the establishment of a real republican government in France; if they cannot see the charm of the example of *cheap government*, the reformers can see it. And, great as appear to be the demands in this set of Norfolk resolutions, I warn the Ministers and the Parliament that they will find them to be a trifle after the establishment of a CONGRESS, consisting of a President, a Senate, a House of Representatives, cheap government, no aristocracy, and no paid clergy in France. For my own part, I have always rejected the idea of a new form of Government in England. I have always wished, and I still wish, the same form of Government to remain, though I would have it as *cheap* even as the American government, and can see no reason why it should not be still cheaper, without impairing any one of the King's prerogatives; without taking from the peers any one of their just privileges; and not only without diminishing the real dignity of the throne, but with making it greater than it now is; but far is it from the fact that all men are of my opinion in this respect. Many, and multitudes too, are disposed to think that cheapness never can be connected with this form of Government; and all men who do not live upon tithes or upon taxes, are bent upon having cheap government. The example of France will be prodigious in its effect; and to prevent this effect, the only effectual way is to yield *now*.

There is a notion afloat, that the long adjournment of the parliament, and the issuing of the special commissions were intended to *make the people cool and quiet upon the subject of reform*; that it was expected that the number of the terrific sentences would fill people with fear and alarm, just as the beholding of a dead corpse makes people forget, for the time, all matters not immediately affecting their lives; that it was hoped that the display of so much power, and of such prompt vigour would subdue the minds of the

tax-paying community, and make us, while the unhappy sufferer was dangling from the gallows, or was being hurried away for ever, from the place of his birth and from all those he held dear, and that while the shrieks of mothers, wives and children pierced our hearts, we, casting aside all thoughts, of resisting aristocratical encroachments, should shrink within ourselves, think of nothing but our safety from hanging or transportation, and, so far from still persevering in demanding reform, should think ourselves lucky if our former demands were overlooked and pardoned! Now, I do not impute to the ministers designs, hopes and expectations so unworthy and base as these; but, I do know that there were ruffians base enough to entertain these hopes and expectations; ruffians who would see the blood of half the people shed, if they were convinced that it was necessary to their own unjustly received emoluments.

At any rate, the hopes and expectations of the ruffians are blasted. The grand array of death; the shedding of blood; the cries of mothers, wives, and children; the lamentations, the echoes of which have filled every hamlet and village of Hampshire and Wiltshire; these, while they have filled the hearts of the people with grief for the sufferers, have not subdued their minds; have not made them cowards; but, on the contrary, every man in the kingdom has now learned, from the evidence given at these very trials, the real cause of scenes so heart-rending and so disgraceful to the name of England. And, as this cause is at once traced back to enormous taxation and enormous tithe, and these again traced to a want of reform in the parliament, the pain arising from the sufferings of these victims of want has increased the national resolution to obtain and secure a radical remedy; and, accordingly, hundreds of thousands of men in the middle, and approaching towards the upper ranks of life, who were lukewarm in the cause of reform before these special commissions were issued, are now amongst the most resolute and

impatient to obtain it. The resolutions at Norwich were carried without one single dissenting voice out of three thousand persons, which would not have been the case only one month ago. The scenes in Hampshire and Wiltshire have not frightened the nation; but they have roused it; for every man says to himself and says to his neighbour: Where are these scenes to end if a radical remedy be not applied?

Divers are the rumours with regard to the sort of reform which the ministers mean to propose; but the general opinion is that they mean to propose nothing which shall, in reality, diminish in any sensible degree the power of the aristocracy in the filling of the seats in the lower House of parliament. For my own part, being acquainted with no one man who ever sets his foot in a government office; knowing no person that is at all acquainted with any man in power, I know nothing but from rumour, such as people hear as they go along the streets. If I were to judge from what I see in the *Morning Chronicle* and other papers, my judgment would have no foundation, except by mere accident; I therefore regard myself as knowing nothing at all of their intentions; and the opinions which I am about to express upon the subject, I wish to be looked upon merely as opinions which I think it necessary to state by way of caution to the ministry as well as to my readers.

Since writing the above (it is now Tuesday morning, and that was written last night), I perceive, in the bloody old *Times* newspaper, a string of paragraphs, or set of observations, which I am much surer were written in some one or other of the Government offices, than the Jury were sure that farmer LOOKER wrote the letter for the writing of which they convicted him. In fact, I am as sure of this as any man can be sure of any-thing upon presumptive or circumstantial proof. This bloody old paper; this paper, always the advocate of tyranny, cruelty, and blood; this hellish paper, the organ of the Christ-killing Jews, and of the stock-jobbing villains who call themselves

Christians; this miscreant paper, which must see its own fall in the restoration of a just state of things; this diabolical vehicle; this infamy of all literary infamies, the present ministry have the misfortune to have on their side. It announced, yesterday, that no more blood was to be shed; and this it did with seeming approbation, when it has been howling for blood for more than two months past. But of this I shall have more to say by-and-by: at present let me come to the string of demi-official observations just mentioned, which I will first insert, and then remark upon, numbering the paragraphs for the convenience of reference, if necessary.

“1. It would now be silly to assert that the cause of reform is merely ‘making progress’ through this country. The country, from end to end, is already occupied and engrossed by that great question, and the mind of the whole community is made up upon it, as if the people of England were but *an individual man*. Bristol and Norwich must be added to the other important cities and towns which have declared their sentiments in favour of *an immediate purification of that body*, which is not constituted so as to represent with truth the opinions, the intelligence, or feelings of the nation, and which therefore cannot be expected, as indeed it has not been found, to consult their interests with the requisite integrity or wisdom.

2. “*Entire confidence* may, we apprehend, be reposed in *the sincerity* with which the *present Ministers* have undertaken to realize the public anxiety for reform.

3. “The grounds on which the former Government was overturned were such that no Ministry appointed to succeed it could have entertained the hope of standing for four-and-twenty hours, except on the strength, and by virtue, of a *solemn renunciation* before King and country of the *unconstitutional heresy of the Duke of Wellington*, who, in declaring that Parliament as already framed was all-perfect, had shocked the understanding of most

"Englishmen, no less than their love of freedom.

4. "That Ministers must, in admitting the necessity of the measure, have anticipated likewise the practical difficulties of carrying any extensive plan of reform into execution, is manifest from the language of Lord GREY, who avowed that *their best reliance was on the support of the people themselves.*

"5. That proprietors of close boroughs under the existing system, or men of overpowering influence in open ones, should, *unless acted upon by extraneous urgent and paramount motives*, accede at once to a change in the constitution of Parliament, whereby their own peculiar advantages over others of their fellow-subjects with equal pretensions on the score of property must be thenceforth demolished, supposes an amount of political heroism in the English aristocracy of the present day, which assuredly the most virtuous of their ancestors could never have been vain enough to boast of. The Ministers, we have no doubt, *do look for an obstinate and bitter struggle on the part of the old borough interest*, to retain the worst features of their system,—that is to say, those of its characteristics which favour most the monopoly of borough-patronage. As few, moreover, of the county members are destitute of borough interest, or unconnected with those who have it, *there is some reason to dread that the spirit of caste, or clanship, may serve to reinforce the cause of corruption*, by procuring for it advocates among Members of Parliament, whose honourable station as representatives for counties or great towns, would help to divert suspicion from their *less ostensible objects*, and enable them, under the respected robe of county-members, to indulge, while they concealed, their contraband propensity to *the traffic in rotten boroughs*. We have little doubt that the *war-whoop will be yelled in many quarters against the spirit of revolution* with which this country has been infected

"by the Continent, and that a *long and strong pull will be risked by the borough oligarchy*, as their last stake in the fruitful misgovernment of England.

"6. Now there is but one effectual expedient for defeating this policy of the dealers in old abuses: it is to show them, from the outset, *that their cause is desperate,—that the nation are universally leagued with the Government* in defence of a measure by which the Crown itself must be strengthened, all temptation to corrupt the legislative body be annihilated, and the burdens of the people be *essentially and permanently reduced.*

"7. What are the details of the measure to be proposed by Ministers, we do not undertake to specify. *Universal suffrage*, however, will *undoubtedly have no share in it*. Ballot, it is said, will *not form part of the plan as introduced to Parliament*, although it would be affectation to deny that the feeling in favour of that important novelty gains ground among most classes of our countrymen, and that if not checked by further inquiry into its merits, *the result may be its adoption*, ere long, into the frame of our Parliamentary constitution.

"8. But again, and earnestly, we pray our countrymen to meet in every part of Great Britain, and *honestly to stand by a reforming Administration*. It is a rare phenomenon, and let it not be undervalued; for its pledge is one which deserves the public reverence, and the perilous difficulty of fulfilling it demands the support of men in whose eyes freedom is something better than a shadow.

"9. The pretence that meetings in favour of reform would but '*embarrass*' the King's Ministers, has been made use of, invariably, by *those whose wish is to embarrass them, by leaving them at the mercy of the borough-traffickers in Parliament*. The Minister himself has called upon *the nation to support him*,—that is the true reply to all such *sham objections*.

"10. Lastly, let the people accept

"whatever reform may be offered and carried through Parliament; *be it ever so narrow and minute*. We ought to remember at once the difficulty and the value of a first step towards amendment. It must inevitably lead to more; and, as the harbinger of more, be it welcomed."

I repeat that this is a writing put forth by the ministers. I state this in the most positive manner; and I defy contradiction. It is too well written, too sensible, too pregnant with important matter, to have proceeded from the pen of any of the unprincipled and bloody crew who generally write for this paper. It is the MANIFESTO of the ministers against the boroughmongers. It is a call upon the nation to support the former against the latter. About six days ago I was told that which now seems to have been very likely to be true; namely, that the boroughmongers had had a grand meeting, and had intimated to Lord GREY that they were resolved to oust him from his power, if he attempted to use it for what they called the destruction of their property. I was further told that he had given way, and that he proposed to do nothing more than throw open to the hundred such boroughs as contained less than two hundred and fifty voters each, and to give two members to each of the towns, Birmingham, Manchester, Sheffield, and Leeds. This story, which represented Lord Grey as contemplating, not a fraud upon the people, for it was too barefaced to be called a fraud; but an insult to them, so gross, so offensive, as to be sure to lead to his speedy expulsion from office; this story was not to be believed; and I rejected the whole of it as romance. But I am now of opinion that the combination against him here mentioned has taken place; that he is convinced that the threat will be acted upon; and that he now, in reality, finds himself compelled to place a *bona fide* reliance upon the people for support against this combination, which support he certainly will receive, if he do enough to satisfy reasonable men; but

which support he will not receive if he stop short of this mark.

In paragraph No. 5, the difficulties of the ministers are stated; the nature of the struggle is described; and those difficulties and that struggle are truly described. It is truly observed in paragraph No. 6, that the oligarchy are to be defeated, only by their being convinced, *that their cause is desperate*; and that the *nation is universally leagued with the government*. This is, indeed, the only way to reduce the oligarchs to reason and to subdue them; but next comes, the way for the ministers to secure this *universal support of the nation*; and this way is, by the minister proposing that which will satisfy all reasonable men; not all men; not even me, though I deem my plan perfectly just and proper, and though I am convinced that it will, in the end, be adopted. I have proposed annual parliaments, not only in conformity with the ancient laws and customs of the country, but as a thing which I am convinced is expedient. I have proposed universal suffrage, and have given reasons perfectly unanswerable with regard to the justice and also with regard to the tranquillizing tendency of the measure. Now I believe that the nation might be satisfied; I do not say that it ought to be satisfied, but, from the love that men have for peace, from their anxious desire to prevent confusion and anarchy, from their natural horror of civil strife and inevitable bloodshed, I think that the nation might be satisfied with parliaments of two, or even three years duration; that it might be satisfied with the extension of the suffrage to all householders paying scot and lot. For the reasons before mentioned, I think that the nation *might* be satisfied with these; but satisfied WITHOUT THE VOTING BY BALLOT, I am sure that the nation would not; and I am sure that an attempt on the part of the ministers to exclude it, would raise against them a cry, such as never before reached the ears of affrighted public offenders. Even those who are for the most limited reform, insist upon the

necessity of the ballot. The moment the subject is mentioned in any public assembly, every voice bursts forth in its favour. In my plan of parliamentary reform; or, rather, in my description of the plan, I observed, that, as to other parts of it, men might honestly differ in opinion; but that, with regard to the ballot, the man who opposed it must, of necessity, mean dishonestly; he must, of necessity, to repeat my own phrase, be a "*real rogue*." An honest man may oppose it thoughtlessly; may oppose it for want of knowledge on the subject; may abuse it, as the thoughtless readers of the bloody old *Times* newspaper abuse me, without any inquiry into my character or conduct; but the man who clearly understands the *effects* of voting by ballot, and still opposes it, must, of necessity, be animated by a wicked motive; and must be *essentially* a rogue.

For, what are the effects of the ballot? 1. To render bribery and corruption impossible. 2. To prevent all canvassing and all expense to both electors and elected. 3. To put an end to all undue bias of every kind, and to leave every man to act according to his own conscience. 4. To put an end to all drunkenness, all rioting, all breaches of the peace, all destruction to property and life, which now are almost constantly attendant upon elections. 5. To put it out of the power of a returning officer to act a partial or unfair part. 6. To prevent those endless heart-burnings, and law-suits, and quarrels, that arise between neighbours, friends, parents and children, brethren and relations of all degrees, as the natural fruit of contested elections. 7. To prevent the time of the House being occupied by the trial of election petitions, and to sweep away that mass of election laws, which form a code, the very existence of which stamps unspeakable disgrace on the character of the country.

Such being the natural, nay, the inevitable, effects of a system of voting by ballot, must not the man who cannot but see those effects, and who still opposes the measure, be, in very es-

sence, a rogue? For, can a man who wishes for the continuance of bribery, corruption, false-swearing, lying, drunkenness, breaches of the peace, destruction of person and of property, everlasting feuds and spite amongst friends and relations and neighbours: can a man who wishes for a continuance of all these not have it in view to profit by them; and can he have it in view to profit by such means, without being essentially a rogue.

There have been men audaciously unprincipled enough to stand up, aye, in a public assembly too, and assert that the *ballot has been tried in America and has failed*. We have a very recent proof that it has not failed in France, at any rate. But France would be nothing with me if it really had failed in America; for there is another English people; there is the same language and men of just the same habits and character. What, then, are the proofs that these desperate tax-eating impostors produce of the ballot having been *tried* and found to *fail* in America? Oh, one of these impostors has been *told this* by an "*American gentleman*!" Perhaps the American gentleman told him that America did not lie across the Atlantic, but on the north side of the Chinese Wall! Another of these impostors has received a *letter from a friend in America*, assuring him of the trial and of the failure! Why, Scott Elton had received a *letter* assuring him that one of our county jails was full of foreigners, who had been concerned in setting the fires; and upon his belief in that letter he stated this in the House of Lords. Impostors; impudent, sharp-set, greedy, unprincipled impostors; ignorant, ignorant to a beastly degree, also, you do not know, then, that the ballot is *the law* in America; that it is the law enacted by the Congress and the State Legislatures; that this law has existed from the moment that the Government itself existed; that that excellent and cheap and wise Government was formed by votes given by ballot; and that from the first formation of the Government to the present hour, no change has ever been made in

the law; no motion has ever been made for any such change; and yet you have the audacity to assert that the ballot has been *tried* and has failed in America.

Failed! How has it failed, impostors? Greedy, tax-eating impostors, how has it failed? Has it failed to cause elections to be carried on for the President, the Senate, the House of Representatives of the United States, and of the Governors and Houses of Assembly of twenty States besides. Has it failed, you brazen blood-suckers? Do the American gentlemen, and your letters from friends in America, tell you that it has caused all these hundreds upon hundreds of elections to take place without producing one single riot within forty years, and **WITHOUT PRODUCING ONE SINGLE DISPUTED RETURN OF A MEMBER?** Yes, you cormorant impostors, you real rogues, you rogues in very essence, without producing one single election petition in the course of the whole forty years!

Failed! Has it failed to cause a government to be carried on, under which the population has increased from three millions to twelve; under which cities have sprung up to surpass almost the whole of those in the old world; under which a commercial, marine, aye, and a naval force, rivalling those of England herself, have grown up; under which such abundance, such happiness, are enjoyed by the people as to induce Englishmen to fly to the country with their capital, their skill, and their families; under which ten such Ambassadors are sent to Europe as Europe never saw before; and, oh, you audacious public-robbing vagabonds, you real rogues, has the ballot failed to cause this excellent government, the whole of the civil establishment of this great and happy country, to be carried on for a less sum annually than the *twentieth part* of what Sir JAMES GRAMER proved a Parliament, *not chosen by ballot*, made the English people pay to one hundred and thirteen privy-councillors?

In short, to refuse the ballot is to refuse **EVERY-THING**. There is no middle course here: there must be

ballot or nothing. as to the other parts of the measure, we may be satisfied that the motive of the ministers is good, and that whatever they obtain may "*lead to more*," as is expressed by this writer; but, if the ballot be refused, whatever confidence may now be reposed in the sincerity of the ministers, will vanish at once; will yield its place, not to suspicion, but to an assurance that their professions have been hypocritical, and that their design is that the cormorants of the system shall still go on devouring the vitals of the people.

The closing two paragraphs, 9 and 10, are worthy of some particular observation. Paragraph 9, which speaks of the pretence of those who deprecate meetings for reform, as tending to *embarrass* the ministers, forcibly brings to our recollection the conduct of BURDETT at the Middlesex Meeting. This famous old agitator, who made the chains of the Bastille rattle on the tops of five hundred coaches from London to Breatford, and back again, and of whom I remember that Mr. WINDHAM said, upon seeing fifty thousand of the people drag him in triumph along Pall-Mall, "One cannot help admiring the *zeal and sincerity* of those good fellows, though one knows, and (turning to me) you will live to see, that not *one particle* of that sincerity exists in *the breast of the man on whom they are bestowing all this applause.*" How often have I thought of this within the last fourteen years! And here let me stop to observe, that the ministers do not seem to be aware of one description of opponents which they will have to overcome on this subject of reform. I have said a hundred times over, and I here repeat, that I do not believe that real reform has a more bitter enemy than this very BURDETT, who has always been wanting a *want of reform*, and has always done everything in his power to keep himself supplied with the commodity. The different bands into which the House will be divided will present a curious spectacle. In the first place, there will be the pocket-borough people. These will indeed require to be "*acted upon by*

extraneous, urgent and paramount motives." It will require little short of a personage, now very famous about the country, whose mere name produced such wonderfully complaisant conduct in the rich ruffians at Preston. It will require little short of the interference of this "*extraneous*" personage to produce a relaxing in this set and in all those who are connected with them. Next will come a set or band not much less in danger, but to whom the ballot especially would be fatal. Then comes the band of BURDETT, not numerous, but excessively bitter; with mouths full of reform. Oh, they love reform passing the love of man for woman; but they will not have it of an "*un-English character*:" they will have "*purity of election*," or none: they will have "*men come boldly up to the poll*," while the steward's or the tax-gatherer's look sends a notice of ruin to their hearts. This band, some of whom will be for the ballot too, anticipate real reform with apprehensions natural to the frogs when the beams of heaven threaten to suck up the water from the pools. They are conscious of their utter inability, their complete destitution of the sort required, of their want of industry and of pluck into the bargain. As long as reform is refused, they have something to talk about; they have all the changes to ring over and over again; but, grant the reform, and they are like Locke's young man that was learning to dance, when the trunk was taken out of the room, in the presence of which he learned to cut his capers. Take away this subject of complaint from them, and their "*occupation is gone*;" farewell to Old Sarum, Gatton, and Callington; farewell, O Malmsbury, to thy delightfully dilapidated abbey, and thy still more dilapidated consciences! Farewell, O Cornwall, and to all thy perjuries! While these remain, they can bellow like bragging Bobadil: "Twenty more! Kill 'em! Twenty more! Kill them, too!" But, take away this everlasting ground of their parrot-like eloquence, and they are like the same Bobadil, who, when the stick comes rattling

across his back, wonders what ails him, but he is sure that his disgrace is owing to the planets. The uneasiness of this band, if the ministers propose a reasonable extension of the suffrage, and of voting by ballot, will be highly amusing. They have sense enough to see, in spite of their monstrous presumption and vanity; or rather they have instinct enough to feel, that they have *nothing in them*. They well know that any-thing like an honest reform will make complaints and revilings give way very speedily to earnest and harmonious efforts to discover and adopt measures for the restoration of the country to happiness, tranquillity, and greatness. In discussions and deliberations relating to such measures, they can take no part, their knowledge extending not beyond the bow-windows of a shawl-shop, or something of a similar or inferior description. *The people*, who will of course esteem men according to their capacity of rendering them service, will turn with contempt from these kettle-drums; and, in a short time, the whole band will be swept into oblivion. The band know all this; and, therefore, their alarm and tribulation will be inexpressible; this will be one of the great advantages of parliamentary reform, that it will brush aside all *empty pretenders*. There are none of these in the Congress of America: the reason is, that the people are fairly dealt by; that they have no reason to choose a man merely because he has a rough tongue; for they have nobody that they want to have reviled. The questions, therefore, which they put, when a candidate is proposed to them, are: Is he a man of sense? Does he possess the necessary knowledge? Is he industrious? And, Will he attend to the performance of those things necessary to our interests? Such also are the questions that we shall put, to be sure, when this monstrous abuse shall be removed; and it is, as I said before, one of the great advantages of reform, that noise and nonsense will get brushed aside.

Now, however, with regard to paragraph 9, it is very true that the minister

himself has "*called upon the nation to support him*," and that Burdett's objection made at the Middlesex Meeting was a "*sham objection*." It is true also, that the nation ought to *answer the call*; but it is further true, that the nation is answering the call, and that, too, in the most proper and most resolute manner; but the call is answered upon the clearly understood ground that the suffrage is to be greatly extended; that the monstrous iniquity of rotten boroughs is to be completely broken up; and that the voting is to be by ballot. I appeal to every man of candour whether this be not the clearly understood condition upon which even the most staid part of the people are answering the call of Lord GREY. I do not, therefore, like paragraph 10 of this set of observations; for, though I know that narrow and minute reform must be "*accepted*," if it be carried through Parliament; and though I know that it would naturally "*lead to more*," yet I could not follow the advice of this writer, and *welcome* it as the harbinger of that more. It is a right that is demanded; or it is a *gift* that is prayed for. In either case, to dole out something far short of the expectations of the party demanding or praying, is equally unwise. If it be a right, then to withhold is a *wrong*; if it be a *gift*, then to give grudgingly, to give reluctantly, is really not to give at all. This is so manifest, it is a truth which all experience so firmly ratifies, that I deem it impossible that it should not be attended to by men who have their own *all* as well as the *all* of their master and their country at stake. Were there no other objection to the "*narrow and minute*" reform here hinted at, this one objection would be quite enough; that it would still keep the subject open; that it would still make it the complaint in every man's mouth; that it would still make the aristocracy and their encroachments the burden of every complaining pen and tongue; that it would still, in short, expose them to all the accusations to which they are now exposed. Oh! no; the true way is to do that that will satisfy all just and

reasonable men; and then we have peace; and then we may begin marching back, till we get into our old paths of plenty for those who labour, of respect and reverence for the laws, and of ungrudging obedience and honour to those who administer those laws.

And, surely, if ever there were a moment at which a restoration to these inestimable blessings were doubly desirable, this is that moment. It is impossible to look at the state of this kingdom, shaken to its very centre, in spite of all its immense resources; it is impossible to look at the state of France and of the far greater part of Europe; it is impossible to open one's eyes without imbibing the conviction, that some very great changes must take place in the mode of managing the resources and conducting the affairs of this most important country of all; and, O God! how often have I said, that these changes never can be made, in a peaceable manner, without councillors who have the people at their back! Have the people at their back this ministry cannot, without a reform of the Parliament which would be satisfactory to that people. In short, nobody can do the thing *but the people themselves*. Fully and fairly represented *they would do it*: they would carry the Minister though every measure necessary to the safety and honour of the country: but, *without that*, they will leave him to shift for himself. Lord GREY should have impressed fully upon his mind, that he can preserve his power by no means other than that of the support of the people. It is right indeed that it always ought to have been thus; but many centuries have passed since it was thus before. Out of the excess of evil comes good; and at last, the monstrous burdens that the people have had to bear have actually given them the *mastership*. Even their defeats and the punishments inflicted upon them have added to their power; for they have only produced a smothering of the struggle for a moment; and this, which is manifest to every one, the Minister himself cannot but perceive. Every-body felt that the Duke of Wellington *could not have*

remained in power after his declaration at the opening of the Parliament. The people, generally speaking, had no objection to him before that: till a very short time before the Parliament opened he certainly contemplated the making of a Parliamentary Reform; or, at least, he was balancing on the point. Two days before the Parliament opened, or about two days, the bloody old *Times* newspaper announced that he meant to make no reform. The speech was therefore waited for with angry anticipation; and when the speech came out accompanied with his declaration, the expressions of the people were such as I wish Lord Grey could have heard. The *ninth of November* only brought into the glare of open day, and proclaimed to all Europe, that which the people of England well knew before. After that he could not remain in power. No doubt he had the votes and might have kept them; but the "*extraneous*" storm, the peltings and hootings and revilings, were such that it was impossible for him to preserve his place without a destruction of respect for all rank and dignity; indeed, without exposing the King himself, so popular but a few weeks before, to something very nearly approaching to popular insult. Therefore, even those who approved of his conduct were compelled, even for their own sakes, to wish for his removal, which necessarily included the removal of all that had co-operated with him. Lord Grey's accession to power gave great and general satisfaction, because the people understood it to say this: The Duke is driven out for having declared against reform, and Lord Grey therefore comes in to make a reform. No minister could ever stand fairer than Lord Grey did until the announcement of an addition to the standing army was made, and until the special commissions began their works. These works, and especially those at Winchester, all particulars of which I refrain from detailing at present, produced a most disadvantageous effect with regard to the new ministry. As long as the hanging was confined to the crime of *arson*, the people pitied and mourned, considering the cruel lives which the

sufferers had led. They mourned however in silence. The considerate deeply regretted, while the selfish timid acquiesced in the necessity; but when the commissioners came to Hampshire, where no man was even *tried for arson*, and where a whole half dozen were left to be hanged under acts of parliament neither of which was more than about twenty years old, every mouth was opened with expressions of dismay and horror; and when the bloody *Times* newspaper communicated the intelligence of a hanging of COOPER and of COOK, never shall I forget the exclamations of the people.

In ordinary times, here would have been enough to shake a ministry to pieces; but the ministers have had the good sense to listen to the cries of the people as far as life is immediately at stake. Let us hope that the same feeling will further prompt them to spare the bleeding hearts of parents, wives, children, and brethren, by following the advice which I most respectfully tendered them in my last Register.

The feelings stirred up by these dreadful scenes, having now somewhat subsided, they are looking with more earnestness than ever for that great measure which they hope will prevent such scenes from ever again lacerating their hearts. That the sun gives light is not a truth more indubitable than that the want of a reform of the parliament, and that *that alone*, has been the cause of all these calamities: the one of these truths is just as clear as the other in the mind of every man in the kingdom. Therefore every additional calamity, every additional disgrace, adds to the conviction of the necessity for a parliamentary reform: any man that will make it may remain minister, and no man that will not make it can remain minister for any length of time. Lord Grey need not call upon the nation to support him; they are quite ready enough to support him; indeed he sees that they are all quite ready. It depends on himself, and on himself alone, whether he will continue to be minister and save the country from convulsion, or whether he will not. "*Extraneous*" that

support, indeed ! The difficulty would be for him to find any half-dozen people, men or women, not ready to give him that support ; unless it were those who live upon tithes and taxes. But, if he were to refuse to propose a reform of the parliament ; or if he were to adopt that very " narrow and minute measure " which this writer hints at, he would be precisely in the situation that the Duke was in on the ninth of November ; for the people are far more alive to the subject now than they were then. The augmentation of the army and the special commissions have certainly given a shake to their confidence ; and they are looking forward to the 3rd of February with earnestness and anxiety perfectly indescribable. To me it is the most wonderful thing in the world, that the aristocracy, above all men living, should not see that their own security, and their only security now rests upon their *taking the people by the hand*. Never was there a body of persons of equal number, who had so much at stake as the nobility of this kingdom now have ; nobody grudges them their titles, at least nobody but empty-skulled fools, who are not as a thimble-full of water compared with the Thames, when viewed in conjunction with the nation. No body grudges them their immense estates ; nobody grudges them the respect and deference due to their rank : it is in the very nature of the people, and of all people of all countries, to pay respect to antiquity of family, whether accompanied with intrinsic merit or not ; and yet, while they have this natural respect, this cheerful obedience, this ungrudged reverence, tendered them ; while they have here more real power and domination voluntarily offered them than ought to be enough to satisfy the most haughty and overbearing of mortals, they cast all this aside as nothing worth, and hold, with the grasp of grim death, that ill-gotten power which they cannot keep without a new code of laws, the most harsh and sanguinary that the world ever beheld. In speaking as I have done above of the feelings and disposition of the people of England, I know that I speak the truth : I know that

even yet the aristocracy may take them by the hand, and that all this terrible turmoil may be made to end in peace. But, if they be still so blind and so obstinate as to refuse to do this, *the Minister may do it at any rate* ; and it is his duty to do it ; because the safety of the people depends upon his so doing. Let him *try* them however : let him say, If you turn me out, *you turn me out hand in hand with the people*. His power would be as durable as his life or his health, if he chose it to be so, and his name would live in the grateful recollection of the children of the children who have yet to be born. No man ever stood in such an important situation as Lord Grey stands at this very moment. A week or two will probably decide whether he be to be huddled away into everlasting obscurity along with the Addingtons, the Percevals, the Jenkinsons, and the Wellingtons, or whether he be to be revered in life and remembered after death as the restorer of the freedom, the happiness, and the honour of England. *The nation will not sink* : let him remember that. Confusion and anarchy would lacerate it ; would make it tear itself about for a while ; but out of that confusion it would rise, having broken all its shackles, and cast all its debts to the winds, greater, higher in spirit, more prosperous, and more powerful than ever. Here are all the elements of greatness. God has done every-thing for us, and our forefathers have handed down God's gifts unimpaired : our own industry and energy are too great to suffer us to become a little nation ; but the desirable thing is, and the thing for which I have pleaded, ever since I had the power of pleading for any-thing, is, that the restoration should be accomplished in a peaceable manner ; that we should regain all that our forefathers bequeathed us, and that, too, without the spilling of one drop of English blood. That this may be done, if Lord Grey will say the word, I am certain ; and that he will say that word, is my most anxious wish. Before I shall be able to put pen to paper again, the question will probably have been

decided; but, come what will, I shall be satisfied of having done my duty.

WM. COBBETT.

P. S. It was my intention to insert here the speech of Sir THOMAS BEEVOR's and those of the other speakers at the Norwich Meeting; but I have not room. Some of these speeches would make the ears of the boroughmongers *tremble*. I cannot refrain, however, from inserting that of Sir THOMAS BEEVOR.

SIR THOMAS BEEVOR then came forward, and said—In rising to propose to you a series of resolutions, I cannot help recurring to the progress which Reform has made in men's minds within a short period. Not many years ago those who advocated Reform were a few despised calumniated individuals, and only 12 years has passed since the thousands who met to petition for Reform at Manchester were attacked by the yeomanry, cut down and trampled upon, and for this act of tyranny and oppression the thanks of the country were voted to the magistracy, upon the motion of your noble fellow citizen, Lord Sidmouth. (Laughter and hooting.) Now how different is the case—the schoolmaster is abroad, men better know their rights, and even our wise rulers feel that men have rights as well as duties; but the present time is more peculiarly adapted for the discussion of the question, because the noble Lord at the head of the Government, and those united with him in the Administration, are not only favourable to Reform, but stand pledged, and indeed have come into power, for the express purpose of carrying it into effect. This however is no reason why we should relax our efforts; let us remember that in the present Administration there are some of the friends of Mr. Canning, the implacable enemy of Reform. Another party who came into office about three years ago, and gave the question the go-by on the pretext that the people were indifferent to it. Let it be recollected by every man that when the Duke of Wellington brought in his great measure of Emancipation, it was suffered to pass, clogged with a clause by which 300,000 Irishmen were disfranchised. With respect to the present distracted state of the country, it was to have been hoped from the present Ministry that something might have been done. Something has been done—an increase of the army has been ordered, and special Commissioners have been sent round the country to expound the law to deluded men, that is, to hang, transport, and imprison the suffering population by wholesale. It is necessary to show Ministers that we shall not be content with the shadow of Reform. It is not disfranchisement but extension we want; it is an alteration of the system which will go largely to increase the elective franchise. If that

be done, whatever my own private opinions may be upon the question of universal suffrage, I shall not quarrel with the measure, though it goes not the length I wish it to go. Good policy demands unity of sentiment, if we wish to obtain any part of what we agree as necessary; at the same time honesty demands that we should avow our opinions, and though some men will not go the length I go, yet I can act with those whose views upon the question are not so extended as my own. I will endeavour to state to you my feeling on the subject, and I pledge myself never to let the question rest till the whole is obtained. It is not necessary that I should enter at great length into the general question, but in stating my views, I will lay before you some arguments which, to my mind, have appeared conclusive. First, I am an advocate for universal suffrage, without any qualification, mental reservation, or restriction whatsoever. If an extension of suffrages be granted, there is no point at which it can stop. The argument which applies to some applies with equal force to all. Some say, Let property be the qualification; (cries of "no;") but what man is there who is possessed of no property? Numbers of you possess no property but the labour of your right hands; but you may be called on to serve in the militia; your life and service may be devoted to your country; on an invasion you may be called on to sacrifice all your property, while the wealthy man can for a few pounds purchase a substitute. Others say that the qualification should be to those who pay direct taxation; but why should it be in favour of direct taxation? The amount of the former is about one-eighth, of the latter seven-eighths. Why should the one-eighth be represented, and the seven eighths not? Others say, Intelligence should be the qualification. It would be a somewhat difficult matter to decide what amount of intelligence should be necessary; certainly, if no more intelligence was required to become an elector than is necessary to become an hereditary legislator, the suffrages would not be very limited. With respect to the duration of Parliaments, I consider it a matter of very secondary interest; it would be better that they should be annual, or rather sessional, than triennial; it would be much more reasonable that when the Parliament has met together to transact the business of the country, that they should go through that business and dissolve as a matter of course, till a similar body should be required for the administration of affairs. The arguments which are urged in favour of triennial parliaments apply equally to parliaments of seven or of seventy times seven years. I am not at all disposed on the present occasion to quibble or to split upon details: I make only one exception in favour of the ballot. (Loud cheers.) One of the arguments used by writers was that the mass of the people were supposed to use their suffrages independently:—if they cannot show any better arguments

against the adoption than this, their assertions must fall to the ground. Another objection to the ballot is, that it would make the people too independent—that the servant would vote against the master, and tenant against the landlord, and so on. This was only a proof that independence among the body of the people did not exist. I have now laid before you my scheme of Reform: never will I cease to advocate it till it is gained. The resolutions I have to read, though they do not meet my views exactly in words, yet they do in principle. But on the first and last points I feel it right to say they go to the full extent of my opinions both in words and principle. (Loud cheers.) Sir Thomas then read the resolutions.

TO THE
LABOURERS OF ENGLAND,
ON THEIR DUTIES AND THEIR RIGHTS.

Kensington, 24th January, 1831.

DEAR FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN,

You have always been dear to me, whose greatest pride it is that I was born and bred amongst you; who has, in his travels about the world, never seen any people so industrious, so sincere, so virtuous, parents so tender, children so affectionate, servants so willingly obedient, friends so steady and so true. Your character and your conduct have always made you dear to me; no time, no distance, has weakened my regard for, or my anxiety for, your welfare; from across the seas I addressed you; through the walls of a prison you heard my voice; my heart has always been gladdened by your happiness, and saddened by your calamities; but, if you have always been dear to me, you are *doubly dear to me now*, when your afflictions are so great and so various, and when I am cheered with the hope of seeing you once more the happy people that our grandfathers and grandmothers were.

In this important crisis, *pray hear me patiently*, while I speak to you of your *duties* as well as of your *rights*: for, in demanding the latter, you ought not to forget the former; duties and rights go together; and he who refuses to perform the first, tacitly abandons his right to the last. Good food, raiment, and all the necessities of life, the labourer has

a *right* to; but that right is founded on his performing *the duty* of labouring; or on his being *willing to perform it*. It is of great importance that you understand this matter *clearly*; and I will now endeavour to enable you to do it.

There was a time when, in every country in the world, there were no laws, and no such thing as property. The people used the earth and all its produce as they pleased; that is to say, each man took whatever he wanted, if his strength or cunning would allow him to do it. No one acknowledged the superiority of any other: might gave right: strength and wisdom were superior to weakness and folly: and there was no other superiority or inferiority acknowledged amongst men. This was called living under the law of nature. When God put it into the hearts of men to change this state of things, and to make rules and laws for the observance of the whole, they agreed that the whole of the community or body of people should enforce these laws, against any one or more that broke them. The great law of all was this; that, in future, every man should keep to himself; should call *his own*: should be able to apply to his own use solely; that which he had got by his labour. For instance, John Stiles, when living under the law of nature, might take a piece of land, and cultivate it, and have a crop of wheat growing on it; but, when fit for the sickle Tom Nokes, a great deal stronger man than Stiles, might come and cut the wheat and carry it away and let Stiles have none of it. It is not likely that men would be so villanously unjust as this, or that the rest of the people would be so base as to stand by and to see Stiles thus bereft of his wheat, and have nothing left to exist upon, perhaps, but a few wheel-barrows full of damned potatoes; this is not likely; but it might happen, and sometimes did happen, perhaps, and therefore all the people agreed to enter into a society, to make rules that should give Stiles an exclusive right to his crop, and that should punish such a fellow as Nokes as a robber, if he came to take the crop away.

Here, my friends, you see the origin of *property*, which word means a thing which belongs to a person's self, and a thing that nobody else has any right to. But, observe, Stiles had no property in the crop till he created it by his *labour*; and that, therefore, labour, and labour only, is the sole foundation of any property whatsoever. Man's first duty, then, is to labour in some way or other in order to raise his means of living. If his father, for instance, have laboured before him, and has given or left him the fruit of his labour, he has as good a right to that as if it were the fruit of his own labour; a man's next duty is, to refrain from taking by force or by fraud the property of another man; for, to protect men in the enjoyment of their property was the great end in forming civil society. Perhaps it would not be difficult to prove, that men who are compelled to work for their bread, are, provided they earn a sufficiency of food and of raiment and other necessities of life, as happy and even happier than those who are not compelled to work for their bread; but at any rate, such is the nature of things, such is the order of the world, that there always have been and always must be some very rich and some very poor, and great multitudes not rich; but in a just state of things, there never will be great multitudes steeped in poverty. The order of the world demands that some shall think, while others work; that some shall make and execute the laws to which all are to yield obedience. Poverty, therefore, even in its extreme state, gives no man a right to view his rich neighbour with an evil eye, much less to do him mischief on account of his riches. If the laws be impartial in themselves, and be executed with impartiality, every man's conscience will tell him, that it is his bounden duty to yield them a cheerful obedience, and further, to yield respect and honour to those who are charged with the execution of the laws.

Such are the great duties of all men in civil society; and God forbid that these principles should ever be rooted

out of the hearts of the very best and most virtuous of all mankind, the agricultural labourers of this land, so favoured by God Almighty, and for so many ages the freest and happiest country in the world! But, my friends, men did not enter into civil society for the purpose of bringing upon themselves *duties only*: they had another object; namely, that of creating and enjoying *rights*. Just, indeed, as we have seen in the case of John Stiles, who had his crop of wheat taken away by the stronger man Nokes, who left him nothing but a few wheel-barrows full of accursed potatoes, and all their natural consequences, poverty of blood, leprosy, scrofula, pottle-belly, and swelled heels! Now, whenever civil society produces such a state of things, when a laborious man like John Stiles is treated in the same way that Nokes treated him, that civil society has not answered its purpose. Labour, as we have seen, was the foundation of all property, and must always be the foundation of property. The labourer, therefore, has a property in his labour; and, as St. James says in his Epistle, and as Moses and Jesus Christ himself say, to rob the labourer of his hire, that is to say, to take from him or to withhold from him the due reward of his labour, is the greatest crime that man can commit against God.

The *rights* of the labourer are, first, to have food, raiment, fuel lodging, medical and spiritual comfort, in return for his labour, and all these, too, in quantity and quality sufficient for the preservation of his life, health, and vigour. Next, if he be unable to work, unable to earn a sufficiency for his family, or unable to obtain work so as to obtain that sufficiency; in either of these cases, he and his family have a right to have a sufficiency supplied out of the superfluities of those to whom the law of civil society has secured more than they want. This claim of the poor man is, as Judge Blackstone states, founded in the very first principle of civil society; for it cannot be believed that men can have assented to enter civil society for

any purpose other than that of the benefit of the whole; it cannot be believed that a million of men, for instance, entered into civil society in order that a couple of thousand should have all the meat and all the bread and all the good clothing, and that all the rest should live upon potatoes and go covered with miserable rags. No man upon earth, unless he be one who lives upon the labour of others, will pretend to believe that men entered into civil society, in order that those who did no work, that led idle lives, that created nothing, should have bread and flour and beer and clothing and all sorts of good things, a hundred times more than they wanted; while those that laboured and made all these things, were compelled to live upon a miserable watery root, or die with starvation.

Such are the *duties* and such the *rights* of labouring men. Our forefathers, who well understood those duties and those rights, cheerfully performed the one and amply enjoyed the other. They had an abundance of meat, of bread, and of all the fruits of the earth; they were clothed throughout in good woollen and linen; they had great store of household goods and of every-thing to make life easy and pleasant; and when old age or widowhood, or the orphan state, or accident, or any circumstance producing indigence, befel them, the priest of the parish maintained them out of the tithes, administering to their wants as the law enjoined, "with his own hands in charity, humility, and mercy." And this, observe, was a **RIGHT** which they enjoyed, and that, too, a right as perfect as that of any man to his house or his land. When our country was bereft, by means which I have not now the room to describe, of that species of protection for the poor, the poor-law was passed to supply the place of that protection; to parochial relief, therefore, the aged, the widow, the orphan, the infirm, amongst the labouring people, have just the *same* right as their forefathers had to that which was administered to them in so just and kind and Christian-like a manner.

That the ministers and the Parlia-

ment may be pleased to listen to the advice which I have so respectfully tendered to them in the forgoing letter; that you may live as happy lives as our forefathers lived, and that we may all see harmony once more restored in England, is the sincere prayer of

Your faithful Friend,

WM. COBBETT.

TO
THE LABOURING PEOPLE
OF BOTLEY.

Kensington, 24th January, 1831.

IN No. IV. of this work, I addressed you on the subject of FLEMING'S (Willis) speech, made against me, at a dinner at *Botley*, where one of the *keen* WARNERS was in the chair at one end of the table. They **EXULTED** at the circumstances *that drove me from Botley*. In a few weeks afterwards we read of an attack on the homestead of Willis (Fleming); and now, in the weekly paper ("THE BALLOT") of yesterday, we read the following:—"A most alarming fire broke out last night at the seat of J. Fleming, Esq. (one of the members for this county), at Stoneham Park, four miles from this place, which threatened destruction to the mansion, but by the wind changing, this disastrous fire was confined to the two wings which were completely gutted. No lives were lost, and the property, we believe, was insured. It has been ascertained beyond doubt, that the fire originated in the apartments appropriated to the servants, therefore it is *not to be considered as the work of an incendiary*, but the pure result of accident." What! the two wings take fire by accident at one and the same time! This paragraph is, apparently, taken from the paper of the very villain, at Southampton, who published the attack on me by WILLIS and the GRASPALLS and their crew. They have, seemingly, *something else to do now* than to utter slanders on me. It will be curious to hear what they will have to say, when Fleming gives the GRASPALLS the next guttle

and guzzle. In the meanwhile I have the pleasure to tell you, that I sleep as soundly as you do.

WM. COBBETT.

FALL OF SIGNOR WAITHMAN.

THE efforts of this noisy "City Cock" to get into a fat birth for life, that of CITY CHAMBERLAIN, have been defeated in a most signal manner, the poll being 3405 for Sir James Shaw, and 1986 for him, when, on Wednesday night, he gave up the contest. I am aware of the natural dislike of my readers to have their valuable time wasted on remarks on the conduct of such a man; but, there are circumstances, connected with this election, which will, I hope, be my apology for the remarks that I am about to offer. On the 26th instant, I sent the following letter to the Editor of the *Morning Chronicle*.

To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.

Kensington, 26th January, 1831.

SIR,—I went, on Friday last, with the intention of being the very first Liveryman of London to vote for Sir James Shaw in preference to Mr. Alderman Waithman. I was prevented from so doing by the speech of the Alderman, which, in point of length, exceeded that of the time that I had to spare. To-day I have voted in accordance with my first intention; and, if you will be so kind as to give me the room, I will state to you, and through you to my brother Liverymen, *my reasons* for giving this vote, which reasons are as follows:

I have known Sir James Shaw rather more than *thirty years*; and I never have known a man of more uprightness and more benevolence, completely severed from all ostentation. I have known several of his acts, either of which would add lustre to the brightest character. I have never been what can be called *intimate* with him; our acquaintanceship arose from his visiting an American gentleman, a common friend,

at my house, in the year 1800; we soon became opposed to each other in politics; but, though we had not spoken to each other for some years, he came to see me *when I was in prison*, and, upon leaving that prison, I found that though Messrs. Alderman WOOD and GOODBHERE had greatly interested themselves for me, it was *to him* that I owed a great part of the indulgent treatment that I experienced, to which there belonged this additional merit, that he does not, *even to this hour*, know that I ever was apprised of his benevolent interference.

Still, Sir, notwithstanding these considerations, which by most men will be considered sufficient to determine my choice, in a case where the office to be obtained has no apparent connexion with political principles or consequences, if I had seen in his opponent a man *unexceptionable in other respects*, and *of my own political principles*, I should have deemed it my duty to vote for that opponent; because the happiness and honour of our country ought, in my opinion, to be preferred before every good of a nature more confined.

But, Sir, do I see in Mr. Waithman a man of my political principles? The great principle is, and has been, in this country, for years, *the absolute necessity of a radical reform of the Parliament*. To that principle Mr. Waithman is a *greater enemy* than Sir James Shaw, in just that degree that *open* is less injurious than *disguised* enmity. When Mr. Waithman was Sheriff, he refused to call a meeting for reform in the county of Middlesex, though the requisition, most numerous and respectably signed, was carried him by Major Cartwright. In the perilous year 1817, when thousands of petitions were presented for reform, he got up a meeting at the Freemasons' Tavern, to pray for a reform *more moderate* than the petitions prayed for; and his language upon that occasion was such as to encourage the Sidmouths and Castlereaghs to pass the horrible laws by which they crushed the press and crammed the dungeons. If he, or his sons, had not places under the Whigs, in 1806, it was not *for want of asking*

for. And have we forgotten his "*retiring from public life*," with all the lugubrious solemnity with which a Nun takes the veil, carrying with him, however, into his retirement, a *service of plate*, instead of a crucifix? Have we forgotten this, and his *throwing off the veil* (perhaps it was a *shawl*), and coming out again with more front than ever, as soon as he had *compounded for his sins*? And have we forgotten his refusal to listen to the *Butchers* in the case of the *grand contemplated job for slaughtering cattle by steam*; and have we so soon forgotten the figure his name makes in the Appendix to the Parliamentary Report on that curious matter? And can we have forgotten his conduct with respect to the City Meeting for the purpose of *applauding the French* for their last glorious achievement? And, looking at these things, or at any one of a score others that I might mention, are men to be accused of "*political apostacy*," because they prefer the consistent, the sincere, the modest, the upright, the benevolent, though politically erroneous, Sir James Shaw to a man like this?

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient

And most humble servant,

WM. COBBETT.

The letter arrived too late, I suppose, for insertion in the *Chronicle* of the 27th. At the close of the poll, on Wednesday, just after I came away, the speech-making began, and WAITHMAN again accused his opponents, and me amongst the rest, of *political apostacy*, and even of "*rank conspiracy*." One of his partizans, a Mr. DILLON, who, it seems, came from a *Committee in Westminster*, produced a *letter from Burdett* to the chairman of this committee, in the following words:

"Brighton, Jan. 25, 1831.

"DEAR SIR,—I am sorry I was not earlier aware that I had any power of serving Mr. Waithman in his election for the Chamberlainship of the city of London, or of marking, with propriety, my sense of the invariable conduct of Mr. Alderman Shaw, as a public man, and particularly of his conduct as Sheriff towards the electors of Middlesex, during the great contest with Mr. Maiuwarding, the pre-

siding Magistrate, and Aris, the gaoler of the Coldbath-fields prison; and which, finally and fortunately, established the independence of the great metropolitan county. Upon that occasion Mr. Alderman Waithman's exertions were not wanting on one side, any more than Mr. Alderman Shaw's on the other. Both laboured, as they always have laboured, in their vocation, and both are fairly and equally entitled to the support of all those who maintain the same principles with themselves; but that Mr. Hume should withhold his support from Mr. Waithman, and give it to Mr. Alderman Shaw, is *news indeed*—it both *grieves and surprises me*. He cannot surely *know the history* of the times in which we lived previous to his entrance upon his public career, or have a notion of the dangers and difficulties and disadvantages Mr. Waithman exposed himself to, in maintaining a cause few men ventured to own, though now become fashionable; nor, on the other hand, of the obvious line of safe and selfish policy his antagonist, with all the selfseekers of the day, then followed. Verily, he hath had his reward; and if it depended on the electors of Middlesex, I am satisfied Mr. Waithman would now, though late, reap his: I sincerely hope he may, not so much on his own account—although I am anxious on that also, for I think he deserves it—as on account of the public, to which nothing is more prejudicial than the *constant example of unrequited efforts in its behalf*, accompanied with *mortifying neglect*. I am glad to hear that Mr. Hobhouse presides at the meeting to-day; it must be *pleasing to the electors of Westminster*, so many of them being electors of *Middlesex*. Had I known in time, and that I could have been of any use, I would, notwithstanding my old enemy the gout has hold of me by the heel, have put myself into a coach and come up. It is troublesome to write, so I must end; have the goodness to give this letter to Mr. Waithman's Chairman, with 50*l.* contribution towards his expenses.

"I remain, dear Sir,

"Yours very sincerely,

"F. BURDETT."

The reader will laugh at these sly hints about *Middlesex*, particularly at the idea of a poor good-for-nothing thing like this, thinking that he could set people against Mr. HUME, who, be it remembered, did NOT "*stick his knees in Canning's back*!" This is a pretty fellow to talk about *consistency*, and to rip up the anti-reforming principles of Sir James Shaw! This is a pretty fellow to "*grieve*" at Mr. Hume's supporting, for a civil office, a man who, 25 years ago, opposed him in politics! and HOBHOUSE, too! fed with *pap purchased with public money*, and married to a wife who had, all her

life; been *tax-fed*? This is another honourable proof of the goodness of Waithman's pretensions. But, do we not judge of this man's cause at once, when we see amongst his supporters BURDETT and HOBHOUSE, who were, only a few months ago, actually *pelted off the hustings at Covent Garden* by the people, of whom they have the brass still to call themselves the representatives? But (I had like to have forgotten him) WAITHMAN had *another* supporter, Mr. WOOLER, who speechified and accused me of having *deserted the country* in 1817, when I went to America! This miserable declaimer, whose writings could not live a day in any thing higher than a *Two-penny scale*! This battered sot, whose brains, when not animated by gin, are as vapid as the contents of a mug filled from the tap-tub; this scribe, who was silenced at once by an act that put his productions at a price but one degree higher than waste paper! This is a pretty *specimen* of the supporters of Waithman; a fine and triumphant contrast with the "*Slades and the Rouths*," who were "*apostates*" and "*conspirators*" because they differed in opinion from a man like this!

Waithman makes it *a crime* in the "*Slades and the Rouths*," that *they* proposed to raise a sum of money "to put *Mr. Cobbett in Parliament*." Why, they *did* subscribe; and, the only difference between them and his worthy friend, Burdett, in this respect is, they *did it* without *promising* to do it; and that he *most solemnly promised* to do it, and *did not do it*! This is the difference between WAITHMAN's supporter and those who "*conspired*" against him. His friend, Mr. DILLON, when he was pointing to the *statue of Pitt*, as that of the man who had done so much mischief to the country, was not aware, perhaps, that Waithman himself *voted for the putting up of that very statue*, or, at least, did not oppose it; and that his apology for so doing was, that his friend CHANTRY, who was to make the statue, who was to have our money for doing the job, was "*a true friend of liberty*!"

The hand-bill, circulated in 1817, entitled "*SIGNOR WAITHMAN*," representing him as a *POLITICAL QUACK*, was written by Major Cartwright, and I have it now, *in the Major's own handwriting*! The Major read it to Burdett and me, at the house of the former, in James Street. The Major had no thought of having it printed; but Burdett insisted that it was too good a thing to be kept out of print. So that Waithman did not know that it was to this *consistent* and *serious* friend of his, that he owed the roar of laughter raised against him by that humorous squib. But, "*conspiracy*!" What share have I, at any rate, had in such conspiracy; I, who have been speaking contemptuously of him for *fourteen years* at the least. And as to the other conspirators, to not one man of them did I ever speak on the subject, in my life. Nay, until *about a month ago*, I have not, I am pretty certain, spoken to Sir James Shaw for these ten years last past. Then, he being walking up Fleet Street, and I being in my chaise, going home, I got as near to him as I could, and, as soon as I caught his eye, said: "Ah! we Jacobins shall beat you *now*!" And, laughing, shook his umbrella at me, and said something that I could not hear for the noise of the wheels. In short, my vote was given, when I knew that it was *not wanted*, merely as a mark of my great respect for his excellent private character, and as a mark of my detestation of the public character of his opponent.

As if we still wanted some additional proof of the silliness, the low-mindedness, the want of decent pride, the want of common spirit in this blustering and brazen bawler. I hate to fill up my paper with this rubbish; but as it is likely to be amongst the last that is to come from him, let us have it.

Mr. Alderman WAITHMAN again came forward. He hoped they would do him the justice to believe that he would not shrink back from any contest of that sort so long as there was the slightest chance that its continuance would be attended with the slightest benefit to the public. Notwithstanding the dangerous illness of his son, and notwithstanding the *shameful desertion of his political friends*, he

had still borne up, determined to give the Livery an opportunity of recording their votes. Could he do more—could they require more at his hands? He felt perfectly satisfied, that if the Livery, at the commencement of the Election, had been made sensible of the *deep conspiracy* which was formed to defeat his just claims—however he felt that he had done his duty, and that the time had now arrived when he ought to follow the advice of those friends who recommended him no longer to continue so exhausting a contest. (Applause.) He then proceeded to defend the attacks he had made upon the characters of his opponents, saying that they were public men, open to animadversion, and men whose conduct would hereafter be marked with the *detestation and the abhorrence* which it deserved. He next adverted to his conduct respecting the *late Queen*, and the *sacrifices to which that led*. His enemies might rejoice that his *pocket had been picked* of the expenses of the present contest; but he should still persevere in the same steady and undeviating course. If he could not afford to keep a two-pair front room, he would keep a two-pair back room, and go on still, and, like *Andrew Marvel*, dine off his bone of cold mutton: his health might fail, and so might his talent; but he would support the *great cause* with his *dying breath*. He felt bound to do the *Bank of England* the justice of saying, that he met with *no opposition from that quarter*; but he had been defeated, and the *corrupt influence* excited against him only the more convinced him of the *necessity of the Ballot*. (Great applause.) He feared that the Government was not about to proceed in a right course—he feared that they would at last *sting the people into violent courses*. He believed that with such a government the people could not long be prevented from taking affairs *into their own hands*. He might be asked why he had not sooner exposed the *hollowness of the men with whom he dealt*? He confessed, he was, like *Kal-staff*, ashamed of his recruits, and he did not like to expose them; but they had now *exposed themselves*. He thanked his many friends for their kindness, saying that the poll-books would of necessity be opened on the following morning, *but neither he nor any of his Committee would attend*.

"*Andrew Marvel*" indeed! Did *Andrew Marvel* ever *beg for a place*? As to his "*sacrifices for the Queen*," I could, if I would, tell a story that would make the town laugh for a month! His "*pocket picked*!" The low, the vulgar man, does he accuse the Livery of picking his pocket, merely because they would not vote for him! They seem, at any rate, to have been resolved, not to lead him into a temptation of the sort. What was his conduct as Alderman of our

Ward, at the *St. Thomas's Day* before the last? Did any man ever witness partiality so gross and so foul? Did he not then defend every *abuse*, every *waste of the city's money*; nay, did he not tell the Livery to take care how they countenanced such rummaging into their accounts, *lest they should be deprived of their funds altogether*? Here, too, as in all other respects, the two candidates present a most striking contrast. At that very election *Mr. Scales*, though opposed in politics to *Sir James Shaw*, applauded his *impartiality*, and either proposed or seconded a vote of thanks to him on that score. In short, whatever Liveryman reflected, in this case, had *no choice*: the one candidate was so fit, and the other so unfit, that, to the man who *thought*, there was no room for choice. Each candidate has got his just allotment: the one, the means of extending the sphere of his benevolence; and the other, a pretty good punishment for his conceit, his insolence, and his greediness.

WM. COBBETT.

TO THE

* MARQUIS OF BLANDFORD.

Bolt-Court, Jan. 27th, 1831.

MY LORD,

I HAVE been informed, that a few weeks ago, your Lordship, by letter, told a Clergyman of the Church of England, that the *guilt of setting some of the fires had been brought home to me*, and that, in consequence, *I had absconded*. The object of this present letter is, to request your Lordship to have the goodness to inform me whether you ever did communicate, in the manner above-mentioned, such information; and to apprise you, at the same time, that this letter will be published in the next Register, and also any answer that your Lordship may be pleased to give thereto.

I am, your Lordship's most humble
and most obedient servant,

WM. COBBETT.

No 8 of TWO-PENNY TRASH will be published on the 1st of February.—A gentleman has written to me for leave to translate No. 7 INTO WELSH, to which I have assented.

I shall make a *grand show-up* of "*Spiritual Persons*" next week. They have outwitted themselves this time! The whole country rings with *Cobbett's Sermons*! *Cobbett's Protestant Reformation*! But, what more is wanted than TWO-PENNY TRASH, No. 7?

This little work is 11s. a hundred, if more than 300 copies are taken. "*Cheap Government*" this, at any rate.

To the Editor of THE REGISTER.

January 27, 1831.

SIR,—I shall feel greatly obliged by your telling me, through the medium of your paper, how it is that, although meetings are taking place all over the Kingdom, on the subject of Reform, and the necessity of the *Ballot*, almost unanimously acknowledged, there has been no meeting for Reform in Southwark. Surely it is not because Sir Robert Wilson waxed wroth on the subject of the *Ballot*, in the House of Commons, some time since.

And perhaps you can explain how it is that there has been no meeting of the City of Westminster. It cannot be from the fear of cabbage-stalks and turnips; because if that were the case it could be held in Palace-yard, or some other place remote from the danger arising from a shower of these obnoxious missiles.

We are, doubtless, likely to have a grand meeting of the Corporation of the City of London on the subject very shortly, and seeing that our great Champion of Reform was, on the very anniversary of the conversion of Saint Paul, converted to the *Ballot*, I have no doubt but even that will be agreed to unanimously.

I am, Sir,

Your constant reader,
S.

Bridge-street, Blackfriars.

IRELAND.

THE run upon the Banks, though not to any extent worth speaking of, has commenced even in Dublin, and every-where directions have been issued by the Bank of Ireland to limit the discounts, and to suspend as much as possible the issue of paper, and this at the approach of a famine in the West of Ireland, and a frightful scarcity in every other part of the kingdom. But it is all for a repeal of the Union—all the consequent suffering must be incurred for the good cause, and to please the great agitator! Fools! you are preparing a whip of scorpions for yourselves!

You will not injure the Banks—that we know is not in your power; but you are preparing insolvency for yourselves!

ALARM IN THE MONEY-MARKET.—Since the preceding lines were written, we have received several communications from the country and from our mercantile friends in town, which fill us, we confess, with deep alarm. Mr. O'Connell may be much nearer in bringing confusion on the country than ever, in his most sanguine moments, he could have imagined. Circulars, we know, have been sent by one great house, and perhaps by others, in the corn-trade, to their factors and correspondents in the country, intimating that for the present they must suspend all business—that they will not accept any bills—in consequence of the panic created by Mr. O'Connell. The Banks in Dublin, including the Bank of Ireland, have declined the most solvent bills—and there is a great gloom this day spread over the city. "*The arrests*," says *The Morning Register*, "for the conspiracy to evade or defeat the Lord Lieutenant's Proclamation, caused Bank Stock to fall 3 per cent. yesterday. So much for the wisdom of the arrests!"

We are surprised that *The Register*, which, at least, knows something of the operations of trade, and the delicacy of public credit, and the causes which have produced the present alarm, should have let out such a paragraph as this. Every-thing has fallen, as well as Bank Stock, in consequence of the apprehended scarcity of money from Mr. O'Connell's threat.

The Banks have almost declined discounting. Government Stock has fallen less in proportion than other securities, because the *English* market is open; but the merchant who is forced to sell his *Bank* Stock, which cannot be sent to England, was obliged to submit to a reduction of three per cent.; for the same reason, Government *Debentures* have fallen much more than *Stock*. The best informed persons consider, that but for the London market being open, Government Securities would be from five to ten per cent. lower than in England.

ARREST OF THOMAS CLONEY, ESQ., OF GRAIGUE, COUNTY KILKENNY.—Friday morning, about nine o'clock, two officers from the Head Police-office applied at Mr. Cloney's

hotel, and inquired for him; receiving for answer that he had not as yet left his chamber, owing to his being somewhat indisposed, they politely desired that he should not be disturbed until his usual hour of rising, and said they would wait on him about twelve o'clock, by which hour a number of gentlemen, having heard of the circumstance, called on Mr. Cloney, and tendered their services on the occasion. They all proceeded to the Head Police-office, accompanied by the two officers, where Mr. Edward Murphy, the eldest son of the late Bryan Murphy, Esq., of Kennedy's-lane, in conjunction with Mr. Andrew Tierney, of the house of Tierney, Brothers, and Co., druggists, Skinner-row, entered into the requisite securities for Mr. Cloney's due appearance in the Court of King's Bench on the first day of Term.—*Dublin Morning Register.*

The following Order was posted last night (Friday) on the board in the Chamber of Commerce:—

"TO THE COUNCIL OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE."

"We, the undersigned, members of the Chamber of Commerce, request that you will convene a general Meeting of the Members of the Body as early as possible, for the purpose of considering the propriety of presenting an Address to the Marquess of Anglesey, expressive of their confidence in his Administration, and his exertions to preserve public peace, and to promote the commercial and general prosperity of Ireland.

"The foregoing requisition, signed by one hundred and ninety-six highly respectable members of the Chamber, having been laid before the Council, and considered, it was

"Resolved—That the Requisitionists be respectfully informed that although the Council cordially approve of the object of the above Requisition, they regret that, in consequence of the existing state of public excitement, they deem it inexpedient to call any special general assembly of the Chamber.

"By order,

"THOMAS JAMESON, Register."

Mr. COSTELLOE.—Yesterday two warrants for the apprehension of Mr. Costelloe arrived in town, one directly from Dublin, and the other by the way of Dungannon; but he had gone off in the morning coach before their arrival.—We expected something of this kind.—*Belfast News Letter.*

ORANGEMEN.—We understand that this body has lately been greatly augmented in the north, and a new lodge of highly respectable members is about to be formed in Belfast; and this is the consequence of Mr. O'Connell's agitation—many public-spirited persons, who, in ordinary cases, would condemn such associations, being now of opinion that they are at this time called on to counteract the agitator's insidious efforts to produce revolution in this country.—*Belfast Chronicle.*

DUBLIN, Jan. 20.—In our little Stock-market, which may be regarded as a representation of our limited capital, there is now a sort

of panic. Consols and other Government Securities are regulated by the prices at the London Stock Exchange; but Bank Stock is a local security, and capable of being peculiarly influenced by domestic alarms. The run upon the Bank for gold, which has been made to a considerable extent, produced a fall in Bank Stock yesterday of nearly three per cent.; and up to the moment at which I write the decline continues, but it will not last long. The Bank, with some inconvenience, perhaps, will meet any demand that can be made upon it, and the agitation in our Stock Market, which compared with the occasional convulsions in your's, may be likened to a storm in a tea-pot, will very speedily subside. About a sixth part of the holders of Bank Stock are Englishmen.

Meetings of the peasantry in the North, respecting tithes and rents, continue. All accounts agree in representing the distress amongst the poor as most appalling; and in anticipating a famine in the approaching summer, potatoes are already becoming very scarce, and oatmeal has reached a very high price. I allude particularly to the North and West; but in the South, although the potatoe crop has been deficient in some districts, yet the supply in the chief markets continues abundant, and the price is moderate. In the Clonmel market, for instance, potatoes sell at from 2½d. to 3d. per stone.

In the South of Ireland several Reform Meetings have recently taken place, and others have been convened.

TO MY CONSTITUENTS.

"Within that land was many a malcontent,
Who cursed the tyranny to which he bent;—
That soil full many a wringing despot saw,
Who worked his wantonness in form of law."

Merrion-square, Jan. 21, 1831.

MY BELOVED AND RESPECTED FRIENDS,—I am your servant. My duty is to do your business and to obey your commands. I entirely disclaim the doctrine that a representative of the people can, without being dishonest, disobey his constituents. If he differs conscientiously from his constituents, there is but one course for him to pursue, and that is to resign. In fact, the contest between a representative and his constituents, is almost always a controversy between selfish interest and sacred duty.

When I solicited your votes, I pledged myself to constant attendance in the House. I have hitherto kept that pledge unbroken. It was and is my fixed determination to be in London the day Parliament meets, unless I am prevented by the paltry prosecution which has been instituted against me.

I am bound to say that I am perfectly convinced that the principal motive of the most active advisers of this miserable prosecution is to prevent me from attending in my place to describe and denounce the despotic, arbitrary, and most unnecessary measures that have been resorted to in Ireland.

It would not be convenient for some arch-

jobbers in Ireland, who contrive to stick their families, like leeches, to suck the heart's blood of Ireland, to have me expose all the details of that species of speculation which enriches one family at the expense of an impoverished and exhausted country.

But there is one prime grievance which, above all things, it is my duty to expose—the vestry cesses and the tithe system. In all my addresses to you before my election, I ventured to prophesy that the time was fast approaching when the people of England would join with us in a loud and irresistible demand for the total abolition of the tithe system.

That salutary cry has commenced in England. It is beginning to be re-echoed in a proper and legal manner in Ireland. The accomplishment of my prophecy is fast approaching. If I shall be permitted to do my duty in Parliament this Session, I hope that this most important result will be advanced; but, after all, it is only by the repeal of the Union that we can look with certainty for the total abolition of tithes.

This is one of the great reasons why I insist upon that repeal. Indeed, the Repeal of the Union is the great and really healing measure which alone is calculated to form the basis, and raise the superstructure of prosperity in Ireland. Without it, distress must accumulate; poverty must increase; famine and pestilence, which are yearly taking a wider range, must become almost universal; and Ireland must become a solitude or a slaughter-house. I say this advisedly.

But the Repeal of the Union terrifies the sordid aristocratic absentees, and especially the bloated pluralists of the Established Church, who shudder lest we Radical Reformers and anti-Unionists should realize our plan, of the payment by the State of all such of the Protestant Clergy as really perform spiritual functions, in an ample proportion to their real labours, and not paying at all those who do no work.

It is, however, thought wise and prudent to keep me out of the House of Commons this Session, and, accordingly, this strange prosecution has been got up against me.

I feel it my duty to give you this outline of the motives that have, I am convinced, instigated the advisers of this prosecution. Let me remind you that it requires not only a Reformer but a Lawyer, to speak in the House with effect on the subject of the late Proclamations, and, in particular, to expose the illegal and mischievous tendency of the famous Stanley circular. It would not be disagreeable to that young gentleman not to have to encounter me on a subject so vitally important to the first principles of constitutional liberty.

The late administration declared that they would not introduce any *coercive measures* during the Session. When the Tories made thus a solemn declaration, they were entitled to be believed. It would be impossible to give the same credit to the Whigs. Accord-

ingly I do anticipate, that in my absence from the House there will be some new, and probably more severe Algerine acts (as they have been called) introduced by the Whigs. Mark me well, recollect my prophecy—you will have the Whigs introduce some delusive measure—some nibbling at the Subletting act—it will, probably, be some aggravation to be styled an amendment. There will be an alteration in the Vestry Bill; that probably will make it worse than it now is. There will be some little peddling about corporation monopolies, and a grand inquiry, to last three years longer, into tolls and customs—and these mighty boons will be consummated by some law creating a Dictatorship, or something of that kind, in Ireland. Believe me I shall prove a true prophet.

Preserve this prophecy—and you will find that my words will prove true, or, if not quite accurate, it is only because I probably underestimate the baseness of some of the Whigs.

If I am prevented from attending in my place in parliament—if the voice of almost universal Ireland be, in my person, suppressed—do not, indeed you cannot, blame me.

But I should be to blame if I in anywise transgressed the law. I am a lawyer of great experience in the Criminal Law, and never was there a man more determined not to transgress that law than I was and am. My constant advice to the people for the last twenty-five years always was, as it still is, not to violate the law in any one particular. I should, therefore, be both absurd and criminal if I violated it myself intentionally; and if it be said that I have violated it unintentionally, then, indeed, there is a demonstration of the enormous absurdity of our Penal Code—of its unintelligibility, of its capriciousness, when a lawyer of 30 years' standing, determined not to violate the law, and knowing his every action to be watched, has yet, in presence of his enemies, put himself into their power.

What a happy elucidation it would be, of that which I have so often complained of and exposed—under the title given to it by the illustrious and immortal Bentham—of Judge-made Law.

But, my friends, I can assure you, that, without the most violent contortion of everything that has hitherto been considered as fixed law, and stated to be such by the most venerable authorities amongst the English Judges, it is utterly impossible to sustain this prosecution.

There must be, I assure you, the most audacious perversion of fact, and a still more flagrant violation of law—things, the happening of which I certainly do not at all anticipate—if this prosecution does not totally and ludicrously fail. I tell you as a lawyer and as a man, that I am entitled to an acquittal, even on the showing of my enemies themselves.

I owe it to you, my constituents, to show you that I have not in any one respect violated the law; nay, that, in fact, I am not even

accused of any thing which can justly be called a violation of the law.

The charge against me on the silly warrant is split into two parts. They are, as usual with absurd charges, contradictory of each other. The first is for having *disobeyed* the Proclamations!! There is a charge for you on which to arrest the man who has the high honour of being the chosen Representative of your county. The second is for having *evaded* the same Proclamations. Now, if I *disobeyed* the Proclamations, it is clear that I did not *evade* them; and if I only *evaded* the Proclamations, it is equally clear I did not *disobey* them.

This contradiction is, to be sure, rather a glaring one; but no matter. The entire may serve the purpose of keeping me from exposing, in my place in Parliament, the fatal and foolish proceedings of some of our rulers.

But I proceed to show you the futility of those charges:—

The first is, that I disobeyed a Proclamation. I have two answers to this charge.

The first is, that it is quite untrue. It is quite false that I disobeyed all, or any of them. There is not the least foundation of fact in this charge.

The second answer is, that even if I had disobeyed any or all of the Proclamations, I should not have been guilty of any offence, unless I came within the terms of the act, called the Algerine Act—which, observe, it is not pretended or alleged that I have done.

Thus, my friends, I tell you, that this prosecution is unfounded in two respects—first, in point of fact; and, secondly, in point of law.

The fact is for a Jury—all I could desire, if it were to go to a Jury, would be a fair and impartial Jury—that is; I should desire—and with such a Jury——

The law, however, is so plainly with me, that it will be intelligible to everybody.

I utterly deny that it is any crime or offence to oppose or disobey even a lawful Proclamation.

I know that the reverse was once decided—but it was decided—where, think you?—In the Star-Chamber.

That decision has, until a very modern time, and, indeed, with the single exception of one briefless English Barrister, been held in utter contempt. I would wager any man a thousand pounds to a shilling, that one of the legal advisers of the Crown ferretted out a passage in the work of a modern Barrister—and without examining its slender foundation, nor the palpable manner in which this Barrister contradicts himself—they have instituted the present prosecution upon no better authority, with the hope of reviving NOTHING LESS THAN THE STAR CHAMBER LAW.

I think I know the calibre of some that underhand advised this proceeding, and I cannot conceive any thing more likely to

fascinate such persons as even a chance of reviving an obsolete despotism.

It is indeed part of history, and a remarkable fact, that Lord Coke, when Chief Justice, was earnestly urged by the Crown to give an opinion in favour of the validity of Proclamations. The conduct, on that occasion, of the then Solicitor-General, the too-celebrated Lord Bacon—

“————— Who shined,
The wisest, brightest, meanest, of mankind”—— is well known for his servility and audacity. He endeavoured to cajole, bribe, or terrify Lord Coke into a declaration that the law justified the infliction of punishment for violating a Proclamation; but, although the Judges were then removeable at pleasure, Lord Coke, to his eternal honour, resisted.

This is not the place to quote passages of law, but I cannot resist quoting here the abstract of Lord Coke's opinion, as given in a work of the highest authority, called *Comyn's Digest*. Here is the passage:—

“The King cannot create an OFFENCE by a Proclamation; and, therefore, nothing will be punishable after a Proclamation which was not so before.”

I need not say any more to show that it cannot be punishable as an offence to disobey a Proclamation. I therefore laugh to scorn the charge against me of “disobeying a Proclamation;” and I could defy the powers of human ingenuity to create a scrap of “JUDGE-MADE LAW” to suit this occasion.

But really this is not all. The act which enables a Lord-Lieutenant to use arbitrary, and, indeed, despotic power over all meetings, is in its nature sufficiently severe and sufficiently unconstitutional not to have it extended one iota by construction. It is really most monstrous to talk of extending its effects by any construction; and I trust that the day will shortly arrive when the real advisers of this prosecution, and of the Proclamations, will meet the punishment they so justly merit.

In the quaint language and latinity of Lord Coke, it is said “that all indictments conclude *contra legem et consuetudinem, or contra leges et statuta*. But never was seen any indictment to conclude—*contra regiam proclamationem*.”

We are, I suppose, soon to see such an indictment—another bad precedent to be added to those already furnished by the Whigs when in office.

Leaving this first charge to shift for itself amidst the monstrous novelties of Whig liberality—a liberal, wide, and universal extension of a most penal and restrictive statute—a species of Whig anomaly in our law—Leaving it to shift for itself, I come to the second charge.

It is no less than this—“of a conspiracy to evade the Proclamation!!” There is a criminal charge in a country calling itself free—evading a Proclamation!!!

I did think badly of the Whigs, but really this exceeds all their former outdoings—con-

spiracy to evade a Proclamation. Why, if I disobeyed it, surely I did not evade it—and then comes this admirable legal dilemma. The "*argumentum crucis*" is nothing to it. It is this—

A Proclamation Issues—I disobey it—punishment for that. Well, I do not disobey it. Why, then, I evade it—punishment for that again. Thus, whether it be disobeyed or not, the only thing certain is the punishment.

For committing what is called a crime—punishment—for not committing that crime—punishment again. Really, really, this is a little too bad.

I will put this matter for one moment in another point of view. To evade a Proclamation is to avoid obeying it; but for avoiding to disobey it there is to be an indictment—that is, for not perpetrating what is called a crime. Who ever yet heard of an indictment for evading to steal a horse? But this is a ludicrous mockery.

There is, however, one curious coincidence between the charge of a conspiracy to evade the Proclamation and the accusation brought in Belgium against the celebrated De Potter.

De Potter is well known to have been an ardent enemy to the oppressions which his country suffered from the nefarious union with Holland, and from the grinding and insulting nature of the Dutch superiority. He struggled strongly and perseveringly against the grievances which his native country sustained from the insolent domination of strangers. He was closely watched. The law of libel, the sedition law, were both excessively severe—as severe as with us—but De Potter, who sought ameliorations only by peaceable means, took care not to violate the law. Yet it was determined to annihilate him one way or the other.

Whenever power is determined to crush a man "at all hazards," it never wants a pretext. They could not, it is true, indict De Potter upon any known law. What did the lawyerlings of the Dutch King do? Will you believe it, reader? They actually indicted him for a conspiracy to evade the laws of libel and sedition, or to that effect. The Bench was packed; he was tried and sentenced to banishment.

The coincidence is only in the charge. I have not the talents nor the useful patriotism of De Potter, but I rival him in three things. First, in the enthusiastic love I bear to my unhappy native land: secondly, in the everlasting detestation I bear to the oppressions and grievances under which she labours; and thirdly, in the rancorous and malignant hatred borne towards me by the enemies of my native country.

There the comparison ends. De Potter was not long in banishment. The men who afflicted his country became too outrageously tyrannical, and were expelled. He returned; but, to his immortal honour be it spoken, he forgot the injury done him, and forgave all his enemies.

This trumping up of a ridiculous charge of conspiracy is therefore not new. The case of De Potter is, as we lawyers say, quite in point; but its results are widely different.

I cannot, my friends, conjecture why this De Potter charge should be brought against me. I will not do the legal advisers of Lord Anglesey the gross injustice to suppose that they speculated either on the Court or the Jury. That would be an injustice of which I would not directly or indirectly accuse them; but, if they had so speculated, they would speculate badly.

It is quite true that a former Court of King's Bench decided that the word "pretence" in a criminal statute was perfectly synonymous with "purpose." That certainly was a wrong measure, but one which took place in angry times, and will never be quoted as a precedent for imitation.

I have now, my friends, exposed to you the nature of the charges against me—their contradiction, and their total absurdity.

I am not accused of any immoral offence, of seditious speech or libellous language—still less am I accused of provoking to outrage or breach of the peace. The fact simply is, that Lord Anglesey does not like discussion, and having made up his mind that there shall not be any, in any shape, that he dislikes—on he goes—that is all.

But this would be cruel, if it were not laughable. Here I am striving for three things—First, to abolish Tithes. Second, to destroy Corporate Monopolies. Third, to repeal the Union.

And endeavouring to do these things by peaceable, legal, and constitutional means, and none other, I am set on and assailed as if it were a crime to love one's country, and to struggle honestly, faithfully, and disinterestedly to serve her, and to seek peace, comfort, prosperity, and liberty for her inhabitants.

My constituents—my friends—be not discouraged. Patience—obedience to the laws—no illegal oaths—no secret societies—no turbulence—no violence—but at the same time peaceable, legal, and constitutional agitation. Let every parish, nay let every village meet. Let there be a petition from every village, parish, town, and district. Let those petitions firmly, boldly, but respectfully, demand the total abolition of Tithe and Vestry Cesses. Let them state that Ireland is an agricultural country, in a most depressed state, and, therefore, requires that the agricultural produce should be relieved from all ecclesiastical burdens.

Let your petitions state these three facts:—

First, That Ireland is the most fertile country in the world—the most productive for her extent—the best situate for industry and commerce, and yet that she is the country in the world deriving least benefit from these advantages.

Secondly, That Ireland produces more of all the prime necessities of life than any other country under the sun, and that there is no

other country in which the people receive so little of the necessities of life for their use as Ireland.

Thirdly, That Ireland has, at one and the same time, the richest Established Church in the world, and the poorest population, with the smallest number of votaries of the religion of the State.

Do not ask why all this is so. We do not govern ourselves. We are governed and managed by others. We are a province, when we ought to be a nation.

Do not, therefore, ask why there is so much misery and woe in Ireland, but seek for amelioration through the only channel by which it can be obtained—that of the Law and Constitution; and if I have any influence with you, now, at my instance, and for my sake, redouble your exertions, multiply your petitions, and determine never to relax until Ireland regains her Legislative independence.

I am, my friends,

Your devoted and most faithful servant,
DANIEL O'CONNELL.

PARLIAMENT.

I left off my extracts from the Parliamentary proceedings with those of the 14th of December, and these will be found in the Register, No. 25, Vol. 70. I must now, before the "Collective" meet again, bring up the arrear, which I can do in this and the next Register; and then we shall start again.

Thursday, Dec. 16th, 1830.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

REPEAL OF THE UNION; and, IRISH TITHES.—Every word that is said upon these two important subjects becomes every day of more and more importance; and, therefore, men should read attentively all that they can spare time to read on both.

Lord KING had a Petition to present to their Lordships, on a very important subject, respecting which his opinions were quite at variance with those of the Petitioners. When the measure of which they complained—the Union of Great Britain and Ireland, was under the consideration of the British Legislature—he was opposed to it; because he did not wish the corruptions of England to be increased by those of Ireland. But he now feared that it would be a mischievous experiment to repeal that measure after such a lapse of time. He believed that Ireland would suffer greatly from the separation of the two countries, the more so as they could be separated only by means of war, and to that a repeal of the Union would certainly lead. If he were an Irishman, he might perhaps be induced to

consult his national feeling, in opposition to his judgment. But, although he knew little of Ireland himself, and from what he did know, he believed its condition to be very wretched; yet he had heard that there had recently appeared there some signs of improvement, to which the Repeal, desired by petitioners, would put a stop, by immediately checking the introduction of English capital. His Lordship concluded by presenting Petitions from the Paper-stainers, Carpet-weavers, and other Trades of the City of Kilkenny, praying for the Repeal of the Union.

Earl DARNLEY concurred fully in the opinions expressed by the noble Lord who had just addressed their Lordships; but he had differed from that noble Lord when the Act of Union was passed, for he (Earl Darnley) had advocated that measure, in the expectation that benefits to Ireland would result from it, which he had not yet had the happiness to witness. However, he believed that the good effects would now be soon observed, as the healing measure which the Legislature had most wisely adopted in the last Session had removed the chief obstacles to the improvement of that country. He was convinced that the repeal of the Union would annihilate the incipient prosperity of Ireland. The individual who at present agitated that question had derived his importance from the injudicious attempt which had been made to exclude him from the other House of Parliament. No calamity could be more destructive to the country of that individual than his efforts, should they be successful in repealing the Union.

TITHES.—Lord FARNHAM moved for Returns respecting the Composition of Tithes in Ireland, under the late Act of Parliament on that subject. He explained that the operation of that Act was greatly impeded by the manner in which the Select Vestries for settling the composition of tithes were constituted. The land of many parishes in Ireland was occupied principally in pasture, and in the cultivation of potatoes. Upon the latter the whole burden of the tithes was thrown; so that the very poorest parishioners, to whom the potatoe land chiefly belonged, paid the most part of the tithes, from which the pasture lands, always in the hands of the richest parishioners, were wholly exempt. Hence it became the interest of the Select Vestries, which consisted of only twenty-five persons (they being of course the richest inhabitants), to oppose the composition; because that would equalize the burden between them and their fellow-inhabitants. To enable the poor of Ireland, whose advantage the Act was chiefly calculated to promote, to benefit by its provisions, it was necessary to enlarge the Vestries. He would introduce a Bill to increase them to fifty parishioners, in the course of the Session; unless the Government, in whose hands he would prefer to leave the matter, should themselves introduce the amendment. He would take that opportunity of stating that, in those cases where the operation of the Act was prevented by the tithe-

owners, the opposition was more frequently on the part of lay improPRIATORS than of the clergy.

LORD KING had no doubt, that if tithe-composition were carried into effect in Ireland upon fair terms, it would operate greatly to the advantage of the poorer classes in Ireland, who would get rid of tithe-gathering and proctors, and the whole harassing and expensive machinery for the recovery of those vexatious claims. He held in his hands documents respecting the tithes in six parishes of the county of Wicklow, of which the names were to him unpronounceable, occupying a surface of upwards of 40,000 acres. In those parishes a meeting of 4,000 farmers was assembled to make a composition with Archdeacon Magee. The venerable Archdeacon not agreeing with the parishioners, resorted not to the Consistory Court, but to the Court of Exchequer, as affording the most expensive process for the recovery of his tithes. His Lordship then read the following account furnished by the Archdeacon to one of those farmers:—

Varney Cooney, to Archdeacon Magee,	
debtor.	
Out of the Lands of Grange,	
To tithe of 47 tons of Hay,	
at 30s.	£7 1 0
Ditto of 197 brls. of Barley,	
at 16s.	15 15 2
Ditto of 83 brls. of Wheat,	
at 30s.	13 4 0
Ditto of 193 brls. of Oats,	
at 15s.	13 10 2
	£49 10 4

This land contains 12 acres of wheat, 12½ of barley, 11 of oats, and 20 of meadowing.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SELECT VESTRIES.—When I was in America, the infamous select Vestry-bill was passed. I instantly wrote a Register, dated from Long Island, in which I proved its wickedness and its evil tendency. I was not listened to. And now I am to be quiet, am I, and hear it said in that same House of Commons that passed it, that it is “unconstitutional,” “preposterous,” and repugnant to “common sense!” Why was this not known *then*? Why was this not said *then*? The same man who sits and calls it by these names now was in the House when it was passed; and why did not he say these things of it *then*?

MR. HOBHOUSE presented a petition, which he had to state was most numerous and respectably signed—It was from the Freeholders of the parish of St. James, in the city of Westminster. It complained of a great

grievance—it complained of the deprivation of an important national right—the loss of which had occasioned much and serious discontent throughout many parishes of the Metropolis, and in various parts of the country. The grievance of which the petitioners complained was the existence in their parish of a self-elected Vestry. He was anxious to take the earliest opportunity of stating, that on the very first day after the recess he meant to bring in a bill, the object of which would be to remedy the evils which formed the subject of the present complaint. The bill he intended to bring in would be modelled upon the former bill, or rather would be an exact counterpart of it, in the form it had been presented before it underwent the amendments of a committee. He wished in an especial manner to call the attention of the House to the prayer of the present petition, for such was the indignation which Select Vestries had excited, that he could not answer for the tranquillity of parishes, if something speedy and decisive were not done with a view to the modification of the present system. He was informed that many of the parishioners of St. James's had expressed their determination not to pay rates unless the Select Vestry were abolished.

SIR F. BURDETT said that Select Vestries were one of the practical grievances of the present day, constituting not only a *gross violation of every constitutional principle, but of every principle of common sense*. There was something in them so *preposterous, that an English House of Commons was called upon to get rid of them at once*, and the mode of doing so was perfectly simple: it was by a recurrence to the ancient constitutional principle, *that no man was to be taxed without his own consent*.

The petition was then ordered to be printed

BOROUGH OF EVESHAM.—I notice this in order to put sham-reformers upon record. Corruption is clearly proved; but *precedents prevent Reform*. What can we expect from Reformers like Lord John Russell.

The Marquess of CHANDOS, in rising to make a motion on this subject, said, that the Committee appointed by the House had unseated the Members that were returned, on the ground of bribery; and with this charge before the House, he certainly thought that they were bound to consider whether a new election should be allowed to take place. The evidence before the Committee had not yet been printed; but, at all events, it was known that the Committee had decided against the two Members, on the ground of corruption; and this, he contended, was enough to call for the interference of the House, when it was proposed to entrust the borough again with the right of returning members. All that he at present asked was, that a short time should be allowed for the printing of the evidence, in order that the House might judge for itself;

and he should therefore move, that the Speaker do issue his warrant to the Clerk of the Crown, to make out a *supersedeas* to the writ that had been issued for the election of two Members for the Borough of Evesham.

LORD GEORGE LENNOX seconded the motion, and called the attention of the House to a paper signed Edward Protheroe, Jun., in which that gentleman made the following statement:—"I plainly acknowledge my desire to renew our connexion. There is no inconsistency in this. With you, Gentlemen, I never had the slightest cause of dissatisfaction: it is with the old system of your borough, with that unjust system which, after faithful and diligent services, accompanied by manly independence and disinterestedness in every speech and every vote, left me no hope of being re-elected, unless I condescended to traffic for my seat with those who bartered your privileges."—When such a declaration as this was made by a gentleman who was well acquainted with the transactions of the borough, he thought that the House had pretty good evidence before it of what was the real state of the case; and he therefore trusted that Evesham would be disfranchised, and the representation given to some more worthy place. He begged, however, to say, that he himself personally knew nothing of Evesham, nor had he any acquaintance with the two gentlemen against whom the Committee had decided.

Mr. Ross said, that the sitting of particular Members, and ulterior proceedings against a borough for bribery, were two questions of a totally distinct character. The honourable Member referred to the cases of Penryn and Camelford, as precisely similar cases. In them bribery was proved, and the House was called on not only to suspend the writs, but to disfranchise the boroughs. In Evesham there was 426 voters, and of course they did not all vote for the sitting members; but it had been proved that every one of the non-resident voters who did vote were bribed. Every one of them actually received a bribe. On these grounds he would support the motion of his noble Friend for superseding the writ, which would give the House an opportunity to inquire.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL meant, in the few words he should address to the House, to confine himself to the narrowest limits. He should not enter into the general question of Reform, nor assert that it would be improper to assent to the motion, because the House had already ordered the writ to issue. There were many rights to be considered before the House resolved to suspend the writ. An inquiry should be instituted, and evidence received, to ascertain if the Borough of Evesham were as corrupt as it was represented to be. There were many points which the House ought to investigate; for he had always been of opinion that the Grenville Act, by the inquiries it instituted through Committees, frequently screened cases of bribery, and prevented them from

being so frequently brought before the House, as they were before that Act was passed. The opinions of Election Committees were often, he thought, an obstacle to those inquiries which the House was bound to make into cases of corruption. The question, however, before the House was not whether an inquiry should now take place into the corruption of the Borough of Evesham, but whether the issuing of the writ should be suspended or not? The circumstances of the case were these:—That after an inquiry by a Committee, that Committee had not given the Chairman instructions to propose that no new writ should issue. The first thing the House had to look at must be its own precedents. He had looked at the precedents quoted by the Honourable Member opposite (Mr. Ross), and that Honourable Gentleman could not deny that there were numerous precedents of the allegation of bribery made against Members, and yet the writs for those places had issued. There was no instance of a Committee reporting merely against the Sitting Members, and on that report the House suspending the writ. To justify that, there must be some special report against the electors. It was only said by some of the Members who composed the Election Committee that the case implied further corruption; but that should be made a matter of special report before the House could be able to act upon it. The precedents, then, were many in favour of issuing the writ.

LORD ALTHORP agreed with his noble Friend and the right hon. Gentleman, that this question was to be decided on the narrow ground of precedent; but that precedents were not to be slavishly followed. The House must decide if precedents authorised the suspension of the writ, and it was a matter of some importance that the House should not make a new precedent without due consideration. He did not think that the precedents quoted by the right hon. Gentleman justified the suspension of the writ. He differed from him, because, in the two precedents he had quoted, both the Committees had reported against the election. In the present case, the Report of the Committee was confined to censuring the Members. The right hon. Gentleman said, that Members of the Committee complained of the corruption being extended to the Electors, but that was only the opinion of individual Members, as the Committee decided against a special Report. In the other cases quoted by the right hon. Gentleman, the Committees had made Special Reports; but in those cases where Special Reports were not made, and only the sitting Members were unseated, the House had never thought to suspend the writ. It was not necessary for him to quote precedents of the kind from the Journals; they were so numerous, that every Member must know it was continually customary for sitting Members to be unseated by the Report of the Committee, without the writ being suspended.

He did not consider it of any consequence whether the writ were suspended or not; and if it were the opinion of the House that it should be suspended, he for one should not oppose the suspension. In doing this, certainly it was his opinion that they would act against precedents, and it was neither desirable nor necessary that the House should make any new precedents.

LAW.—Two rather long discussions came after this upon alterations in the law.

Friday, Dec. 17.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Nothing of consequence. Lord King presented petitions from several parts of the country, and he gave the House a summary of their prayers: "Cheap Government, Cheap Law, Cheap Corn, Reform, and Free Trade."

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE LABOURERS.—Mr. CURTEIS, in presenting a petition from Sussex, took occasion to make some observations on the state of the labouring poor, and declared he had conversed with many farmers, who one and all asserted that they never paid less than twelve shillings a week to any description of labourers, whether married or single. For his part, although it had been stated that he paid to his own labourers 1s. 9d. a day, he invariably paid 2s., with the option of their taking piece work if they pleased. The agricultural interests were, however, in such a state of destitution, that they must, would, and should be protected. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. BRISCOE, in alluding to the condition of the labourers, said he was satisfied the only remedy for their distress would be found in the extension of the system of spade labour in the cultivation of ground allotted to them for that purpose.

Mr. LONG WELLESLEY bore testimony to the efficacy of this system. In a part of the county of Essex, near Tilbury Port, six or seven hundred of the labourers who had been in a state of insurrection were reduced to quietude and comparative comfort, by the immediate adoption of the system of spade labour. He deprecated, however, the discussion of these and other vitally important subjects on the mere presentation of a petition, and in the presence of so small a number of Members.

Sir JOHN SERRIGHT said he had devoted a good deal of his attention to the subject of spade labour, and actually allotted gardens to persons in his own parish, who were by no means connected with his property. He found, however, that all projects of that kind failed; and he was convinced, from his own experience, and from conversation with some of the most experienced of the class of labourers, that if they possessed as much land

as they could cultivate by spade labour they could not earn sixpence a day. He should be very happy himself to give land to the labourers of his own parish without the payment of rent, if there was a hope of their being able to subsist upon it; for he would gain much more from the relief afforded to the rates, than from the rent of the land.

Mr. Alderman WAITHMAN observed, that it was not merely the agricultural interest that was distressed; all the interests in the country were in the same condition; leasehold property, especially in London, was utterly destroyed. No partial measure would be sufficient to meet the necessities of the time. Either taxation must be greatly brought down, or prices must be raised. He begged to give notice that on the 15th of February he would submit to the House a string of Resolutions, showing the destructive tendency of the present general depreciation of property.

Mr. Hume, after this, objected to the "must, would, and should be protected" of Mr. Curteis; because he thought that the honourable Member wished to protect the agricultural interest at the expense of other interests. How jealous! Mr. Hume will be convinced that they *will* be protected, and we shall not quarrel about *must* and *shall*.

Monday, Dec. 20.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

EMIGRATION.—LORD TEYNHAM brought forward the subject of the new settlement in the Swan River, a settlement of which we have heard so much. I shall insert a statement that he read to the House, as coming from the Settlement, and then I shall insert his subsequent observations. I have often raised my voice against these cruel delusions on emigration. I know myself what new settlements are, I know what the men are who project them, and I know the greedy and cruel knaves who carry the projects into execution. I therefore feel for every creature who is induced to submit himself and his family to the sore vexation, the certain ruin, and the probable consequent death, provided for them by the greedy and heartless men who thrive by schemes of emigration. I never knew one scheme which, if it succeeded *at all*, did not first produce misery and death to an amount that would rend any heart but that of a speculator; and I insert this instance

failure in the hope that it may warn the industrious and frank, and therefore credulous, people of England, against listening to men whose selfishness makes them false, and whose habits of life have prepared them for practising cruelty without feeling compunction.

An extract of a letter on the condition of the Settlement had appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, which, both on account of the high character of the Paper, and the importance of the subject, was well worthy of attention. He would read to their Lordships the notice in the *Morning Chronicle*, which was in these terms:—

"Distress in the Swan River Settlement."—The following is an extract from a letter just received from one of the most extensive of the settlers in Van Dieman's Land:—"The Swan River settlement is with us, just now, a constant subject of discourse. Messrs Bryan made a good speculation in the William there. Flour sold for 60*l.* per ton, potatoes for 15*l.*, and salt provisions for 8*d.* per pound; the whole of which was taken off their hands by the Governor. The live stock was unsaleable, till the Governor (Stirling) gave them a grant of 350,000 acres to put it on.

[To be continued.]

From the *LONDON GAZETTE*,
FRIDAY, JANUARY 21, 1831.

INSOLVENTS.

JAN. 21.—BURT, T., Holborn-hill, manufacturer.

JAN. 18.—COATES, W., Leeds, grocer.

JAN. 21.—LANE, T., Gloucester, corn-factor.

BANKRUPTCIES SUPERSEDED.

OLDLAND, J., Wootton-under-Edge, clothier.
WEIRSE, T., Belle Isle, Yorkshire, training-room.

BANKRUPTS.

BROUGH, P., Boston, Lincolnshire, scrivener.

COATES, W., Leeds, grocer.

EARLE, W. F. B., Regent-street, Piccadilly,

and Bedford-place, Kensington, auctioneer.

GOODWIN, J., Congleton, Cheshire, grocer.

HARRINGTON, J., Stanway, Essex, victualler.

BEHIR, J., jun., Leigh, Worcestershire, baker.

COOPER, R., St. Philip and Jacob, Gloucestershire, malster.

SON, T., Handsworth, Staffordshire, merchant.

LUCKWELL, H., Old-street-road, potatoe-dealer.

DOUT, W., Ringwood, Hampshire, linen-draper.

ROBERTSON, J., Berkhamstead, Hertfordshire, surgeon.

NE, T., Brighton, taylor.

WILLIAMS, G., St. Paul's Church-yard, warehouseman.

WALTON, D., Oldham, Lancashire, cotton-spinner.

WARD, G., Leeds, inn-keeper.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, 1831.

INSOLVENTS.

JAN. 21.—RUSSELL, G., Brownlow street, Drury-lane, coach-smith.

JAN. 22.—Woolbridge, J. and J., Birmingham, brass-founders.

JAN. 24.—COUSINS, C., Drummond-crescent, Somers-town, carman.

JAN. 25.—LARTER, D., High-street, Shore-ditch, victualler.

JAN. 25.—DESORMEAUX, D., Cole's-terrace, White Conduit-fields, chymist.

BANKRUPTS.

BAUGH, J., Middle Wallop, Hampshire, victualler.

COZENS, J. L., Bedminster, Somersetshire, victualler.

FOX, W., Great Driffield, Yorkshire, tanner.

GRAY, W., Giltspur-street, victualler.

JACKSON, T., Laverick-hall, Cumberland, miller.

LAMB, J. and J., Liverpool, saddlers.

NICHOLSON, T., Burstwick, Yorkshire, horse-dealer.

RICHARDSON, J., Regency-place, Great Surrey-street, currier.

RODWELL, G. B., James-street, Covent-garden, linen-draper.

WEBB, T., Seymour-street, Euston-square, boot and shoe-maker.

WILSON, J. and W., Whitehaven, Cumberland, plasterers.

LONDON MARKETS.

MARK-LANE, CORN-EXCHANGE, JAN. 24.—

In consequence of another very short supply, of English Wheat at market this morning, our millers were free in their purchases of fine quality, at an advance in the prices since this day se'nnight of about 2*s.* per quarter: the middling and inferior sorts were also taken off upon somewhat better terms, and at the close the stands were entirely cleared. Flour continues at last week's prices. Barley is very heavy sale, at a reduction in the value of 2*s.* per quarter. Beans of both sorts are about 1*s.* per quarter higher. Oats are also rather dearer than otherwise. In White and Grey Peas, or other articles, no variation.

Wheat	63 <i>s.</i> to 72 <i>s.</i>
Rye	28 <i>s.</i> to 42 <i>s.</i>
Barley	30 <i>s.</i> to 40 <i>s.</i>
— fine	41 <i>s.</i> to 44 <i>s.</i>
Peas, White	35 <i>s.</i> to 44 <i>s.</i>
— Boilers	45 <i>s.</i> to 48 <i>s.</i>
— Grey	30 <i>s.</i> to 39 <i>s.</i>
Beans, Small	35 <i>s.</i> to 46 <i>s.</i>
— Tick	35 <i>s.</i> to 44 <i>s.</i>
Oats, Potatoe	20 <i>s.</i> to 26 <i>s.</i>
— Poland	29 <i>s.</i> to 30 <i>s.</i>
— Feed	20 <i>s.</i> to 24 <i>s.</i>
Flour, per sack	63 <i>s.</i> to 65 <i>s.</i>

HOP INTELLIGENCE.

BOROUGH, Monday, Jan. 24.—There was a good supply at market this morning, and fine New Hops met with a ready sale. Prices remain the same as this day week.

PROVISIONS.

Bacon, Middles, new...	42s. to 45s. per cwt.
— Sides, new...	42s. to 44s.
Pork, India, new...	112s. 6d.
— Mess, new...	57s. 6d. to —s. per barl.
Butter, Belfast...	100s. to —s. per cwt.
— Carlow...	100s. to 102s.
— Cork...	100s. to —s.
— Limerick...	100s. to —s.
— Waterford...	96s. to —s.
— Dublin...	96s.
Cheese, Cheshire...	40s. to 70s.
— Gloucester, Double...	42s. to 56s.
— Gloucester, Single...	44s. to 50s.
— Edam...	40s. to 46s.
— Gouda...	42s. to 46s.
Hams, Irish...	45s. to 56s.

SMITHFIELD—Jan. 24.

The supply to-day is very short, as compared with late markets; and the morning being fair and cool, there is an improvement in most things, and a tolerable free trade. For Beef we cannot go higher in our general currency than 4s. 4d.; but a few complete Scots may have made 4s. 6d. The best selling Lincolns fetch 6d. a pound.

The prices for Mutton are supported; and some think with a small improvement. There is scarcely any difference per stone between little and big, the soundness being the chief consideration. Lincolns are stated at over 4s. 2d., but hardly reaching 4s. 4d. The top price for Downs continues at 4s. 6d.; choice Veal readily obtains 6s.—Beasts, 2,298; Calves, 110; Sheep, 18,620; Pigs, 160.

THURSDAY, Jan. 22.—The spirit of the deceased Thursday's Cattle Market, to-day revisited its apparently devoted spot, in the shape of about a dozen useful steers, about as many lean and lusty townsend cows; a score of sheep, about as many calves, and a few pigs, for none of which there appeared to be any buyers. It, however, had not quite vanished at eleven a. m.

MARK-LANE.—Friday, Jan. 23.

The supplies are still small, the demand moderate, and the prices the same as on Monday.

English arrivals.	Foreign.	Irish.
Flour . . .	5,710	
Wheat . . .	3,615	2,170
Barley . . .	4,210	420
Oats . . .	695	185
		2,500

THE FUNDS.

	Fri.	Sat.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.
3 per Cent. } Cons. Ann. }	81½	81¼	81½	81¼	80¾	80½

CHEAP CLOTHING, 93, Fleet-street, near St. Bride's Church.—SWAIN and Co., Clothiers, Tailors, and Drapers, gratefully acknowledge the almost unprecedented support with which they have been honoured by the public; and beg to say that nothing shall induce them in any way to relax in their exertions to retain that patronage with which they have been so kindly favoured.

As Swain and Co. manufacture their own Woollen Goods they are able to supply Gentlemen's Clothing at a much lower price than they can be procured for at any other house in the trade. The following is a List of those Prices, for Cash: Superfine Coats, of fashionable colours, from patent finished cloths, 2l. 5s. to 3l.; ditto, blue or black, 2l. 10s. to 3l. 5s.; Extra Saxony Wool, blue or black, 3l. 10s. and upwards; Superfine Frock, with Silk Facings, 2l. 18s. to 4l.; ditto Trousers, 18s. to 1l. 10s.; Cassimere Waistcoats, 10s. to 14s.; Marseilles ditto, 7s. to 10s.; Valencia ditto, 8s. to 12s.; Silk ditto, 14s. to 18s.; a Suit of Livery, 4l. to 4l. 4s. Ladies' Habits and Pelisses, Children's Dresses, Shooting Jackets, and Hunting Coats, Camblet and Plaid Cloaks, Witney Wrappers, and every other garment equally cheap. A large assortment kept ready made. Export Orders executed with punctuality.

I recommend Messrs. Swain and Co. as very good and punctual tradesmen, whom I have long employed with great satisfaction. WM. COBBETT.

MR. O'CONNELL.—A splendid quare Engraving of the Liberator of Ireland, executed on steel, will be presented, gratuitously, to the purchasers of CARPENTER'S POLITICAL LETTER, to be published on the 4th of February. Size of the Engraving, price, 4d.—The orders of Newsmen and Book-sellers will be received from the 1st of February, and the deliveries will be made in the order in which the names stand on the list. Specimens at the Office, No. 21, Paternoster-row, and sold by all Newsmen.

LESSONS on ARITHMETIC, in Principle and in Practice, for the Instruction of Youth of both Sexes; and more especially for that of young Merchants, Tradesmen, Seamen, Mechanics, and Farmers. By THOMAS SMITH.

London: Sherwood, Gilbert, and Co.; and Longman, Rees, and Co.

THE "AMERICAN STOVES" from MR. COBBETT'S Model are now ready packed in Baskets, so that no delay in the execution of orders will take place; also, the "LONGITUDINAL CORN-SHELLER" from MR. COBBETT'S Model, price 3l. 10s.

H. S. W. JUDSON, Ironmonger, Kensington, the only Manufacturer.

Printed by William Cobbett, Johnson's-court: and published by him, at 11, Bolt-court, Fleet-street.